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LADY CLAUDINE;

OR,

THE DOUBLE MARRIAGE.

A DRAMATIC TALE.

BY DR. HORATIO W. NELSON.

CHAPTER VI.

The setting sun had descended nearly to the level horizon of the vast plain, as Brinsley Oakes rode rapidly onward in the direction of the Druid temple, directed thither by a faint blue smoke which he perceived curling up in spiral wreaths into the pure evening air, from the midst of the ruin.

There was something sublime and impressive in the scene around him. The vast prairie-like level of the plain, meeting on all sides the bending skies lent to the boundless surface, over which he galloped, the sublimity of the ocean; and a low, blue haze that transparently veiled the earth, increased this delusive aspect. The sun, slowly descending, touched the horizon with his lower limb, and sent his level, red beams across the plain, lighting up with a crimson glow the pillars of stone that had thus witnessed three thousand years of sun-sets, thus reflected back his fiery beams.

"Massa Cap'n," said Pompey, who was riding close to his master's saddle-bow, "I see de sun set jiss 'em dat away in de big ocean! It look as if we be ridin' on de sea! and dem tall rocks look like ships!"

"Yes," answered Brinsley Oakes, and spurring forward still faster over the furze and stones that made the plain uneven. But he was struck with the resemblance detected by Pompey, and as he gazed they seemed a fleet of war-ships on a sea.

He was at that moment thinking, as the slave spoke, of the smoke ascending from the ruin, and how, before the days of Canute, before the days when Paul first preached the gospel of the Cross in pagan Britain, before Cæsar turned his conquering sword in the direction of "the twin isles of the western sea, Britannia and Hibernia," those majestic columns had stood, and above them rose the smoke of human sacrifices and vapor of incense, as now rose the smoke of the gipsy camp, which he had been told by a shepherd he should find there.

As he drew nearer them the sun slowly sunk beneath the horizon, and the roseate flush which he lent to their Titanic sides was changed to a sombre gray, while, higher and higher above his head, they seemed to rise, increasing in majesty and Cyclopeian dimensions.

Without drawing rein he rode straight into the outer circle of rocks, and, dismounting, cast his bridle to his black servant; and then, slouching his hat and muffling his face, for he was purposely disguised on this expedition, he drew near the centre of the vast ruin. At the farther side, under the protection of a massive pillar of rock, blackened with the smoke of gipsy encampments for a hundred years, he saw the party of wild, mysterious wanderers he had come in search of. There were a dozen men, women and children, seated about a fire, for the evening was chilly, upon which was boiling a pot containing their evening meal, which already they had commenced partaking of.

Brinsley stood a moment regarding the picturesque groupe, which forcibly reminded him of similar Parsee encampments in the East; and then his keen glance scanned each person of the party, for their dark faces were clearly visible by the red glare of the flames, reflected upon them from the crackling fire.

"*She* is not among them! There are two beautiful brown faces, with eyes like those of an Odalisque girl, but I see no resemblance to Kate in any of the faces, even though her skin be dyed with henna, to look like the gypsies I am told she has taken up her life with. I will at least inquire. I seem coersced by an irresistible power of my fate to persevere till I find her! I cannot give up the search if I would. An inner voice seems to cry out—'Seek till you find her!' Like the wandering Jew, I feel that my repose depends upon finding her! and for what? For what end? Would I receive her to my arms? She is mad—gone mad! And were she as sane as the queen, I would not replace in my bosom a faded rose, which I had once flung aside! Why, then, am I possessed with this passion to discover her? Only a strange and restless curiosity impels me; for if I should behold her, I would not make myself known to her! I would not speak to her! Once seeing her and her boy—(*my* boy, dare I confess it)—I would be satisfied! But there prompts me a dark spirit, that if I once see her, I should put an end to this wandering life, and place her in a lunatic asylum; for, thus wandering, she may perchance to cross my path when it would not be pleasant to have her recognize me! What a strange and solemn place is this where they dwell. The shadows of the old Druids seem to flit along beneath the columns, in this uncertain twilight and flickering flames. But I must not delay; for the small cloud I discerned in the south-west is enlarging and advancing, and before I can reach Salisbury it may bring a tempest down upon the plain."

As he moved forward from the obscurity under one of the rocks, and the fire-light shone upon him, he was discovered by a shaggy gipsy dog, which set up a sharp, wolfish bark, and sprung out towards him. The whole party turned their dark faces and brilliant eyes to the place where he was, and three men rose to their feet, and one of them advanced with a scowl and menacing air, half drawing a knife from the folds of his gypsy blanket.

THE ARRIVAL OF CAPTAIN OAKES AND POMPEY AT THE GYPSY ENCAMPMENT.

"What do you want?" he demanded, sharply and haughtily.

"I am a traveler! May I not see the ruins?" answered Brinsley, in a careless tone.

"Visitors come not at this hour here to see this place. If you need direction across the plain, you can have it—for money!"

"I may need it, if it come on dark soon," answered the captain. "Here is gold. You see by it I am a friend to you! When I was a lad I passed half my play hours with gypsies who had camped on my father's estate! There was one of them by the name of Kedar, or Caleb, as he was called, who was almost a foster-brother!"

"Eh?" ejaculated the dark-faced man, looking surprised; "what is your name?" and he surveyed the captain with the sharpest scrutiny.

"It matters not! What is thine?"

"Kedar!"

"And Caleb, also?"

"And Caleb! And now I know thee! I see thine eyes! Thou art Brinsley, the son of the General Oakes," he added, with a smile of pleasure lighting up his bronzed features.

"I will not deny it! I am glad to meet thee, Kedar!" answered Captain Oakes, grasping the extended hand of his former playmate.

"Come and share with us our supper, friend," said Kedar, with that courtesy and correctness of language that characterizes the better class of gypsies.

"For old times' sake I will," he answered; and, being named by Kedar to the rest of the party, two of the females of which also gladly recognized him, he seated himself upon a fragment of stone, and, as he had before often done when a boy, ate of their meal; which was composed of moor-fowl, dried venison, and good wheaten bread, with potatoes; for these wandering Egyptians are epicures, and having all England for their free larder, live often luxuriously; one day perhaps fasting, when their forays were unsuccessful, and the next dining like Pharaohs.

This meeting and recognition, which, at first, Brinsley Oakes feared would be fatal to his object, he now began to regard as most favorable. By eating heartily with them, by recalling their former days, by distributing a small piece of gold or silver to each one of the gang, thirteen in all, in half an hour he had their confidence. This secured he now proceeded, after first sending out food to his servant Pompey, to questions.

"Only thirteen of you? Is this all your party, Kedar?"

"No——"

"Yes," interrupted one of the women, "all de gypsies."

"Then you have some that are not gypsies?" he asked, concealing his interest in this question by an indifferent look, and helping himself to a third glass of rare old wine from a bottle which Kedar had, in some way, possessed himself of in his expeditions among gentlemen's houses, and now brought out in honor of the present re-union.

"Yes," answered Kedar. "Is that good wine, Brinsley?" he asked, addressing his guest, as is the custom of these people, by his first name.

"As good as the finest Tokay," answered Brinsley, with a smile, "if thou knowest what that is. Who are these not of your blood? Some of the Queen's juvenile subjects you have been stealing—I mean adopting?"

"No, they came to us of themselves—a mother and son!"

"Ah!"

"The mother is a priestess!" said the woman, a tall, dark-eyed, handsome creature, as queenly in her carriage as a Spanish donna, who had first spoken.

"What is a priestess?"

The woman touched her head with her fore-finger significantly, and then pointed reverently upward. "Talks with HIM!"

Brinsley understood that she meant she was deranged. His heart beat quicker. How could it continue its even and calm pulsation at such a time? The heart has an instinct of its own, and will act it out.

"Where is she?" he asked.

"Not with us to-night," answered Kedar. "She has gone where (here he impressively pointed upward, but uttered no name for God) told her to take her boy. She said (here he looked up in silence)—told her that he must not be a gypsy. And we let her go with him."

"How long has she been with you, Kedar?"

"Many months. We found her, one night, in a hut near Salisbury, and she, poor, lost thing, joined us, as we took pity on her! She tells fortunes true; but she would never let her boy learn any of our ways! She is proud like, and seems to think he is a sort of a prince, or come of great blood!"

"I believe she is born of a high family too, herself," said the woman who looked so much like a Spanish senora, and who answered when addressed by another of the women by the name of Ketura; "for I am sure some years ago she is the lady who threw me a golden guinea from a fine carriage she was riding in—as fine as the grandest in the land."

"Where is she now? I would like to have *my* fortune told," said Captain Oakes, with a smile, as if he had little faith in fortunes.

"She may not be back in a week! She wanders about; and only when she is badly treated and hungry does she come back to us," said Ketura. "I am sure she has been badly treated by somebody, that brought her to her sad life; for she says she was once happy, but had been deceived, and he who deceived her she had thought was her husband, and when she found he had deceived her, her heart, she says, broke, and she seems to live in a dream now all the time! *We* gypsies call that living in both worlds at once—walking on earth with the head in the skies—thinking the thoughts of—(here she made a reverential sign for God)—and speaking in the words of men."

"If thou wishest thy fortune told, Ketura will tell thee skillfully not only the past but the future. She once, not long since, told the Queen's fortune!"

"The Queen, one would think, Kedar, had a good fortune enough of her own. But, is it true? Where did you ever see the Queen?"

"In Windsor forest. The royal family were out riding one summer's day—a gay cavalcade, full forty in all, with the gentlemen and ladies of the court and servants mounted; and as they passed the camp, for we were then camped there, one of the ladies, in carelessly riding beneath an oak, struck her forehead against a branch, and was knocked senseless from her horse.

"Seeing the commotion, I went near; and finding what had happened, I told them there was a spring of water close by our camp, and if they would bear her there, she would soon be recovered. By the Queen's command, they took her to our camp, and laid her upon cloaks spread by the gentlemen upon the grass. The cool water dashed over her revived her; and then Ketura, who knows great secrets of medicine, bathed her temples with strong water distilled by her from certain roots, known only to us. In a few moments her head-pain passed off, and she rose to her feet well as ever."

"I' faith," said Oakes, "I should like to buy a flask of this famous lotion of her. And how came she to tell the Queen's fortune? Truly, it begins to look like it."

"The Queen, who is as gracious and pleasant as any other fine lady, thanked me for mentioning the spring of water, and Ketura for her good service, and put a golden sovereign in my wife's hand. She then said, 'Can you tell fortunes as well as heal?'"

"Yes, your Majesty," said I. Here answered Ketura, taking the word from Kedar's mouth, "Yes, your Majesty."

"How did you know it was the Queen?" asked Oakes, as if he would see what reply she would make. "Had she her crown on her head?"

"No; but I saw how every lord and lady stood apart from her; how they paid deference to her slightest look and motion; how they bowed and did obeisance when she spoke; how all eyes seemed to look only as she looked, all feet to move as her feet moved, all voices to speak as she spoke and gave the key."

"A very truthful description! You could not by these signs mistake her. But asked she to have her fortune told?" asked the captain of the gypsy woman.

"No. But seeing she spoke so kindly, I said, 'I tell fortunes, your Majesty, but only by human art. But here is a priestess, who tells fortunes by divine knowledge.' I then pointed to the dark-eyed lady."

"What! the mother who had a son with her?"

"Yes."

"She was then in your camp?"

"Yes, Brinsley," answered Kedar, who seemed surprised, as well he might be, at the nervous energy with which their guest asked these questions.

"And did she speak to the Queen?"

"No; she fled on hearing her name."

"Her name? What did you call her?"

"The name she gave us—Cecilia."

"'Poor, crazed Cecilia,' she called herself," said Kedar, interposing his word.

"The good Queen seeing she was alarmed, and wondering at her wild beauty, asked me who she was. But I could tell her no more than what we have told you."

"Did the Queen question her?"

"Not then."

"Did she afterwards?"

"I know not. But didst not thou ask my wife," interrupted Kedar at this point, with a frown, "if Ketura told the Queen's fortune? Wilt thou listen or not?"

"I will listen. I meant no slight to her art and the honor she derived from telling her Majesty's fortune, by interrupting. It is a way I have, Kedar, to be absent-minded, and to think of one thing while others are talking upon different things. Go on! What said the Queen, and what was her fortune?"

"I told her," aswered Ketura, with dignity, "that she would have twelve children, (she has now three), seven sons and five daughters; that she would survive Prince Albert, and live to see her eldest son upon the throne, because she herself would be too aged to reign longer; and he should reign by her consent while she was alive. I told her that she should live to see her empire divided into two kingdoms and one republic; that the Prince of Wales would reign over Great Britain, and her second son be elected king, with the title of emperor, over her East Indian possessions; that the republic which would be wholly cut off from her rule would be Australia! But in lieu of these, I told her that I saw in the palm of her hand that one of her remaining sons would be King of France, by marriage with the daughter of the throne; another reign King of Spain; another King of Germany; and another elected by the Republic of Italy to be their constitutional King!"

"A magnificent fortune!" said Brinsley Oakes, with a light, contemptuous laugh. "Yet it is wonderful how you know so much of kingdoms and their probable destinies."

"Know? We learn not from books, but from the stars and from the spirits who talk with us in our dreams!"

"And what said the Queen?"

"She looked sad and thoughtful," answered Kedar, "and turned away in silence, and remounting her horse, rode off, giving the word, 'To the castle.'"

By this time the shadows of deep twilight had blended with the gloom of night, and Captain Oakes said he would ride, as he wished to reach Salisbury that night.

"But," he added, "if any one of you can tell me where this priestess is to be found, I will give him or her a round guinea, to be led where she is gone."

"I will show thee, Brinsley," said Kedar, "and for old time's sake I will not take thy gold, though gold is the idol, and the life and joy of us gypsies. Yet, ere thou goest, let my wife tell thy fortune. It will offend her lest; for I see she is preparing her spells and her incantations, expecting to do it."

"I am willing. But I trust it will not be so wild a fortune as that of her Majesty's."

"She never failed in one-and-twenty years," said Kedar, with solemnity. "She has told many—a great many fortunes that came true. Only last Thursday the Mayor of Eberton took his own life."

"And what of that? Suicides are common among us English folk."

"But it is not common to have them foretold."

"What was foretold?"

"That the Mayor of Eberton would die by his own hand. This was when he was a young man, and in a frolic crowned Ketura's hand with a shilling, whereupon she told him the future."

"And what was it?"

"That, poor journeyman saddler as he was, he should one day be Mayor of Eberton, and that the morning should arrive when he should shave half his face and no man should ever shave the other half."

"And this came true?"

"To the letter! Last Thursday, as he stood by the glass shaving his beard, he suddenly turned to his wife and said, 'I have a great and ungovernable desire to know the mysteries of the other world. I *must* know them!' Thus speaking, he cut deep into his neck with his razor, and fell back dead!—— But come, Brinsley, let Ketura tell thy fortune."

"I would rather not."

"None but the guilty fear the future, or the revelations of the Past," said Ketura, severely. "Here, within this Temple, we are more powerful to unfold what is to come, and seldom fail! Show me thy palm!"

Brinsley Oakes extended, though with some hesitation, his open hand to her across the smouldering fire.

"One, three, seven lines! These are marks of high blood! But here is an eighth crossing the third line, she said, solemnly, after a close examination of the palm of the unwilling man. This shows an original right direction, but a cross purpose cutting all these nobler lines! Here is ambition, love and wedlock! No—there is a cross line here—it is not wedlock, but a lie! And a lie is deception! Thou hast wronged some one, oh, man! For here it is written as if in the book of Fate!—But hold! Here is another revelation! Avarice has seized upon thy soul! Again I see wedlock, but it is covered with gold pieces, and these gold pieces seem on the under-side to be stained with blood! I am amazed and tremble; for never saw I such scenes as these! Ne'er saw I wedlock before on the palm without flowers; but here are no flowers, only all gold and all blood! But more is here! withdraw not thine hand! I see ink flowing from a pen, and as it touches the paper it becomes blood! And lo! here is a corpse! it is beautiful and calm; and yet upon its face are marks of violence. She died not by God's visitation. I know not the face! And here is a drowned woman, with hair all disheveled; but lo! what sorrow! the head is separate from the body, and lays beside thee upon thy pillow!—a head only—all bleeding, and torn, and disheveled!"

"Woman! fiend! What dost thou conjure up! Thou art false and leagued against me!" cried Brinsley Oakes, withdrawing his hand on the palm of which she was reading such a book of destiny in the future. "Kedar, this wife of thine is more artful than honest!"

"Never failed, what she foretold," answered the dark browed Kedar, with looks of anger in his flashing gypsy eyes.

"My prophecy will be as likely as that of the Queen's," he answered, with a reckless laugh. "Where is my horse? I will ride now! I thank thee, sir gypsy, for thy hospitality. I see a storm advancing and will ride."

"But wouldst thou not be guided where thou wouldst see the woman and her son whom thou didst ask for as if thou didst take an interest in them? Perhaps she could tell thee a softer fortune!"

Brinsley cast a fierce and searching glance at the gypsy chief, to see if he were speaking ironically, and then answered:—

"Yes. I would like to see her! Perhaps, as you say, she could speak softer words than these of thy straight-tongued wife, Ketura."

"Come with me, and I will send a lad with thee to the shepherd's hut, where thou wilt doubtless find her. But," he added, as Brinsley remounted his horse, "I will not deceive thee! What Ketura utters in telling fortunes is true. I have heard what she has revealed concerning thee! I know, therefore, that since we met in boyhood thou hast been familiar in crime; and that evil has been in thy heart and blood upon thy hand! What Ketura says is true! Thou art a bad man! And wert thou Albert of England, and Ketura should say of thee what she has said of thee as Brinsley Oakes, I would shun thee as a bad man! Henceforth come not nigh us! we will refuse thee hospitality! We gypsies are homeless and wanderers, but we are not evil! we betray none who trust in us; we harm not the innocent; we injure not the helpless we shed not blood; we have no certain homes, but we have honest hearts. Ride on! But if thou wouldst see the priestess I will run before thee and guide thee!"

"I would see her," answered Brinsley, concealing his shame and anger, in order not to fail wholly in his object.

The gypsy walked rapidly forward across the plain, making only a sign for the captain to follow him. The latter obeyed and moved on—he and his servant—at a trot to keep up with the swift, light-footed progress of the gypsy.

For two miles, in the direction of the North Star, the three went forward, their way over the dark ground lighted only by the stars. Kedar did not speak, and Oakes felt in no mood to converse with one whom he felt despised him for the evil fortune his wife had given him.

At length a faint light was visible along the level plain before them, shining low upon the ground.

"There is the hut of the shepherd, Andrew," said the guide, stopping and pointing in the direction of the glimmering rays. I go no further, having paid to you the debt of hospitality; for not even a foe should be taken advantage of by our people."

"Thanks, Kedar! Take this gold!"

"No!" answered the gypsy, haughtily.

"Do as you will! Thou art prejudiced, Kedar, against thy old play-mate! and full superstitious to believe all thy wife has spoken about me?"

"I believe it! Thou art a bad man! I ne'er wish to see thee at my camp-fire again!"

"This is too much! I will not be bearded by a vile gypsy! I have extended towards thee too great condescension! Take that, thief and caitiff!"

As the captain angrily spoke, he rode up and struck, with his riding-whip, the gypsy across the face. The man uttered a savage cry of revenge and pain, and leaping like a leopard upon the rider, he dragged him from his horse to the earth before the captain could protect himself from the sudden attack; and ere his slave could come to his rescue. Placing his foot upon his breast, he stooped and felt for his throat, as if he would strangle him; but the African catching him in his long arms about the waist threw him off from his master, reeling him far distant from him.

Brinsley Oakes at once sprung to his feet, and with an oath, and blinded by the shock of the fall, sought his assailant; but the gypsy had fled, and was invisible in the darkness.

"Dem gypsy be de debble, massa," ejaculated Pompey. "Dere no trustin' 'em!"

"If that fellow ever crosses my path again I will empty his heart of the black blood that is in it," said the captain. "The assassin has injured my back so that I am in anguish!—Lift me upon my horse again, Pompey!"

"De marcy save us! De boff hosses be gallopin' off fas' as dey can go! Hear deir huffs rattlin' on de stones!" And the rising night wind bore to their ears the quick sounds of the escaping horses.

"The fates are all against me! May the blasts of the infernal fires consume that gypsy! We are in a bad fix, Pompey!"

"I tink so, massa! But dare be de light? Somebody lib dare, sure!"

"Let me lean upon your shoulder! I am severely hurt! gently! Now lead me to the shepherd's cabin, where the light glimmers from!"

The voice of the guilty man was no longer haughty or imperative. It had a sick, suffering and feeble tone—for pain speedily brings the strong man low, and humbles the pride of the lofty; and he who in the morning felt secure in health and physical power, at evening had to bear for support upon the arm of a poor Ethiopian.

So, slowly and painfully, and groaning at every step, Captain Oakes suffered himself to be led along over the rough ground of the plain, in the darkness, only illumined by occasional flashes of lightning from the south west, their course directed by the gleaming of a light in the window of a shepherd's cottage.

CHAPTER VII.

We will precede Brinsley Oakes and his slave in their slow approach towards the light which promised them shelter and aid in their great need. The shepherd's hut, to which the light guided them, like most of those rude and humble abodes of the dwellers on Salisbury Plains, was constructed of mud or turf walls, cut square with the spade, and piled up, one block of turf upon another, until a square enclosure of some ten feet by eighteen was formed, seven feet high, with openings left in the walls for a door and casements. Upon these four walls (not marble, indeed; but God made the turf as well as the marble!) was braced by poles a roof which was wattled with branches like coarse basket-work; and upon this frame was laid squares of turf, in two strata, one overlapping the seams of the other, to keep out rain! The whole was then covered with a coating of soft clay mixed with dried fern, which when hardened by the sun constituted a firm and durable roof, impervious to storms. It was rude and rough, but it kept out the winter's cold and the wet; and though palaces of marble are more elegant and costly, they do no more! nay, some palaces are cold and cheerless, and in Italy resist not the floods of spring rains. It is not the materials or style or finish of a dwelling which makes it agreeable; but it is the hearts that beat within it!

In this shepherd's hut, which by a turf-wall with a door (closed by sheepskins sowed together) was divided into two compartments, in one of which was an ample stone fire-place, there was no furniture for mere lexury; no fauteuils, no what-nots, no pier-glasses, no thick velvet carpets, no pictures, no Vandyke's, Titian's, Angelo's, Dominichino's; no statuary, chandeliers; no bijouterie upon inlaid and mosaic tables; nothing for show or taste, only for use; such as a bed of fern in each room laid upon wooden tressles; a table, a few blocks for seats; a dozen brown dishes to contain food, and a few horn knives, and pots for cooking; and about the walls, on wooden pins, hung the coarse apparel of the shepherd and his family, not daily worn.

Andrew, the shepherd, was a small man with red hair and long beard of the same hue. He had a mild blue eye with a gentle expression; for one whose daily companions are the sheep and the lamb, becomes lamb-like in spirit, and patient like the sheep. A serene and peaceful calmness beamed from his sun-browned face, and the spirit of benevolence smiled from his lips.

He was seated, on the evening of our story, by the open window of his hut, reading by a rush candle, made in his own dwelling, an ancient looking Bible of King James's time; for the shepherd as well as his shepherd fathers before him, could read—this art being handed down from father to son with this old Bible, which an antiquarian, if he possessed it, would not part with for one hundred pounds! But to Andrew the value of his Bible consisted in the riches of its grace. He was ignorant of the treasure he possessed (as the rare Book-collector would estimate it) only as being the treasure-house of immortal hopes.

He was reading, as was his wont, and had been the wont of his fathers, at even tide, after the sheep were all folded and the little lambs carefully sheltered, and their evening meal had been partaken of with a blessing, a chapter to his wife and daughter, the latter a blooming shepherd's lass of seventeen. The story of Ruth gleaning after Boaz, was the subject of this evening's lecture. While they were, with the simplicity and good sense, which characterizes this class of people, discussing the devotion and purity of the gentle and loving Jewish girl, there was suddenly heard a sharp knock at the door.

"It is the poor crazy lady," said Jean, his kind-hearted wife, whose soft hazel-eyes never shone with any brighter light than that of love and wifely admiration for her lord; "I know her quick rap. Open to her Hetty! Poor thing!"

The pretty Hetty, upon going to the door, found, as her mother had said, the poor crazy woman there! With her dark hair falling unbound adown her symmetrical back, her eyes wild and anxious in their expression, Katharine Cecil stood before the entrance. Upon her pale and haggardly beautiful countenance the light from without shone clearly. By her side, held by her hand, stood a boy four or five years old. His dress though coarse was neat; and his features were finely formed and of that peculiar high-bred outline which belongs to far descended aristocratic lines.

The child looked alarmed, and shrunk back.

"Come in, son! These are friends! God's fear is here! If Jesus, the Lord, had known these good folk when He was on earth, and said He had nowhere to lay his head, He would have found a place here? Jesus was a shepherd, too; and He would have loved this good Andrew! I have laid my poor homeless head many a night beneath this Heaven-protected roof."

"And thou shalt again," answered Andrew, rising and going to meet her as his wife led her in by one hand and took the lad by the other."

"Nay, Andrew Harker, I ask it not for myself to-night; perhaps never again! but for my boy, I ask thy roof's safe shelter for the years of his childhood! I know not what will befal me! I trust I shall not long wander God's green earth; and the gypsy homes will do for me till I get one of those mansions in the skies above! I can pay for my bread and pillow there among them by crossing palms! Let me dwell with them! But, my boy! what hath he done? Let not my woes and curse fall upon him; nor the sins of his father be remembered against him! I have come to place him in thy home, good Andrew—and in thine, Jean! Let me go my ways! Keep him!"

"That we will, lady!" said Jean, as she gave her a seat. "It is a fine lad!"

"Let him watch thy lambs—teach him the gentle trade of a shepherd, Andrew," said Katharine Cecil, earnestly.

"He shall be to me as a son! But it will be a rough out-o-door life, for one who seems gentle-born! He will grow up a plain shepherd lad!"

"So he be honest and truthful, is all I ask! Give me thy hand, honest shepherd! thine, too, virtuous woman!"

The poor demented lady then crossed their hands one over the other and laying hers upon them, thus crossed, said—

"Now by this living cross flowing with warm blood! swear that you will be parents to my boy!"

"We will be," answered both solemnly.

"Take him, then! Once in a while, let me come and look upon him, that he may not forget me, and that the separation break not my heart! I am not fit to bring him up: already he looks upon me with wonder and fear, and marvels that he has a brain-cracked mother! Poor child!"

"What is his name?" asked Andrew, placing his hand softly and gently upon the lad's head.

"His name was—— but no matter! It fires my brain to speak it! Call him by the name of thy boy, thou hast told me of, who perished one stormy night of winter out on the wide plain, seeking for a little wandering lambkin that estrayed."

"His name was Reuben!" said Andrew, solemnly; while Jean put her apron to her eyes to hide the tears her bereavement, when thought of, ever brought into them.

"Reuben be he called from this hour! *I* bear not *his* name! why should my boy!"

Andrew looked at his wife and shook his head gravely, as he said to her in an undertone—

"Some great crime of the father of this lad has brought her to this!"

"She would never tell me her story," answered Jean, sadly.

Hetty now drew the young child towards her, and smiling with the frankness and ingenuousness of youth upon him, said—

"Come to me, Reuben! You are now going to be Hetty's little brother! We will have such fine times in the heather, and following the lambs, and seeing their sports, and listening in clear evenings to the far off chimes of Salisbury bells, and sometimes going to see Old Stonehenge; for the sheep love the rich green grass that grows among the big rocks there!"

The lad drew nearer to her, and leaned against her knee with confidence. His mother watched this movement with interest the most intense and anxious.

"Yes—he will love them! He will be safe and happy here. Now come, storm!" she cried, as the wind at that moment whistled over the shealing, "come thunder and lightning! come sorrow and trouble! I can meet thee, and if I cannot stand against thee I can bend, and break, and die!"

At this moment the inmates of the hut were startled by a loud neighing at the door; and Andrew opening it with looks of surprise, started back at seeing two riderless horses pawing in front of his cabin, and whose widely expanded eyes and distended nostrils showed that they were terrified.

"Some mishap to some travelers!" exclaimed the shepherd! "Bring the light here, Hetty! Whoah! gently, whoah!" he added, in a soothing tone. One of the horses suffered him to lay his hand upon the loose bridle that entangled his fore-feet. "This is a gentleman's horse! and an officer's at that: for it is a military saddle, with holsters and pistols! The other seems to have been a servant's; for he has an out-rider's saddle on him."

"I hope nothing has happened to their riders," said Jean, coming forward. But Katharine Cecil pressed past her, crying eagerly, and in an excited manner—

"An officer's horse! Let all officers and their horses perish! Satan is a general in epaulettes!"

"Here is a valise lashed upon the saddle of the inferior animal," said Andrew, as Hetty drew near with the light. "And upon the plate of the lock is a name! But it is engraven in the old black letter, which I can't read well, though I see a good deal of it in my Bible."

"Let *me* read it!" cried Katharine Cecil.

"Brinsley Oakes!" she shrieked, as Hetty held the rush light to the plate. "Now hath Heaven sent judgment upon him! and his bones will lie bleaching on Salisbury plain!"

"What do you mean?" asked Andrew. "Who is the man?"

"No matter! God and I know!" she answered, in a low whisper, and with wildly glaring eyes. "This must be his horse; for I knew he had come from the Indies. And to hide his boy away from him lest he should kill him, as he said he would, did I bring him here; and lo! the father's horse, without a rider, stands at the door of my child's shelter!" These words were uttered in detached sentences to herself, as she watched Andrew secure the two horses to a corner of the sheep-pen. He then took the light and said:—

"Some one must have met with misfortune on the plain! I must go and see if I can find them and give them aid. This dark cloud will soon bring a storm down upon us; and if any man lies wounded (as may be) he will perish! I will go forth and shout! The light here, Hetty! Let me examine the tracks and see which direction these frightened horses came from."

While he was speaking he heard a deep groan at a distance, and saw the shadowy and indistinct forms of Brinsley Oakes and his African slowly coming forward through the darkness. Prompted by humane emotions he hastened to meet them.

"Are you hurt, men? Were you not mounted? If so your horses are safe, and tied at the door of my sheep-fold! Were you thrown? I hope you are not badly hurt."

"Yes—I was thrown," answered the captain with a groan of pain, not willing to tell all that had passed, "and my man got down to aid me and our horses got off."

"I am glad it is no worse. I feared you might have been waylaid by foot-pads. Any bone broken?"

"I think not—only a severe shock. Are you the shepherd?"

"Yes. Let me aid you!" And Andrew, assisting on the other side, and staring at the black face on the other with the surprised look of one who does not often see an African, conducted Brinsley Oakes to the shieling.

Katharine was standing in the door-way, where she could see the light fall full upon the countenance of the wounded man. Instantly she recognized him; but instead of giving utterance to any exclamation, or betraying any sign of emotion, she compressed her lips firmly, and, though pale as death, let him pass in; but, as she did so, secretly caught her son by the hand and drew him outside of the door with an aspect of fear and dread. Brinsley did not observe her at all.

Andrew placed the officer upon a wooden seat, and Jean brought him a glass of water, and in a little while he was sufficiently recovered to look about him.

"A poor place, sir, you are in, but better than the open plain, and this storm coming on. I hope you are easier."

"Oh, much. I shall soon be able to ride! How far is it to Salisbury, hence?"

"Five miles by the plain across, but seven and more if you take the old Roman road in by the wood-side. But you cannot go to Salisbury to-night."

"Yes. I am now far better. I thank you for securing our horses, otherwise we should have been in a bad plight."

"Oh, that voice—that voice!" said Katharine, who stood in the shadow of the wall pressing her hand against her heart.

"I have only done my duty, sir,—I only wish I had food for them."

"My man, I wish to know if you have seen come here a gypsy woman with a child—a boy."

"Verily, I have! And here she is!"

Katharine impulsively came forward into the light at this, and said:—

"Brinsley Oakes, dost thou seek me out at last?"

"What! Katharine, is it you?" And he stared upon her pale face, and wild eyes, and tangled locks, with amazement and horror.

"All that remains of Katharine," she answered, "save this boy! Thy son and mine, Brinsley!" she said, with a voice undulating with deep feeling. "They say I am mad, Brinsley! But all the world is mad; and a broken heart is the only right heart—for the heart of God's son was broken—broken with a spear! You remember the story of the wicked cross, don't you? Broken hearts are angels' hearts; and one can never go to Heaven, Brinsley, without having one's heart broken! So I don't feel so sorry about it as I did! And I oughtn't to be angry with you for breaking it! Do you think I ought to? I ought not to think bad of you because you are my dear boy's father! And if I speak evil of thee, how shall I teach him to love and honor thee?"

All this was said in a soft, plaintive voice that was touching to listen to. The guilty man looked at first uneasy and then angry. The brow of the shepherd, as he heard, grew dark and terrible, and the light of his blue eyes was more bright and piercing than Jean had ever seen them before, as he fastened them upon his guest.

"Woman—thou art fabricating a tale!" cried the captain, conscience-stricken, yet fearing to acknowledge her.

"No, no, Brinsley! These lips never uttered falsehood! They burn with a live coal taken from the altar of God's truth?"

"Lady, is this the father of thy boy?" demanded Andrew, with that sort of dignity which comes of indignation rousing the inner man.

"Yes, Andrew. And he has sought me out and asked for me, to say that I am his wife and——"

"*Never*, woman! Pompey, go and prepare the horses."

"I believe what this poor crazed creature says," answered Andrew. "I do not know who you are, sir, but if she is your wife, you are a base villain to have deserted her; and if she is not your wife, you are baser tenfold for having betrayed her!"

"Who and what are you that dare upbraid and speak thus to me, your superior?" demanded Oakes. "I am unarmed here, or I would punish thee on the spot for thy insolence, thou low-born hind!"

"Thy words and bearing prove thee to be a bad man! I have not rank, nor money, but I have power and will, and these shall compel thee to do present justice to this lonely young woman, who claims thee as her lawful husband! If thou art married to her, thou shalt not leave this hut till thou hast secured her against this want and wandering life; and if thou art not her husband, thou shalt not leave here till——"

What further Andrew was about to add was suddenly cut off: for at a signal given a moment before from his master, the slave re-entered at this crisis with a brace of pistols which he had taken from the holsters. One of these he placed in Brinsley's hand, and with the other he covered the heart of the bold and generous shepherd! Jean uttered a wild shriek, and cast herself before her husband; Hetty caught the hand of the African, and the pistol exploded with the muzzle towards the ceiling; while Katharine, with a loud laugh, and maddened by the scene, clapped her hands and addressed Brinsley with the most fearful denunciations.

In the midst of this confusion, which was increased by a loud peal of thunder, and the roar of a gust of wind rolling like a billow over the plain, Brinsley, aided by his slave, effected his escape; and was in the act of mounting into his saddle, when the sight of a phæton, dashing up at full speed, surprised him and arrested his foot in the stirrup.

"How far to the city?" cried a gentleman, looking from the open window upon the persons so singularly grouped about the door. The horses were half reined in from their high speed, to give him an opportunity to make the inquiry.

"Five miles," answered Captain Oakes. "We also are travelers, and will keep you company as we ride that way."

The gentleman, who was gray-headed, and with a fine air of fashion, and whose thorough-bred voice showed him to be a man of the upper ranks, stared and looked hardly at the officer. A rush-light, held by Jean, now showed the officer's dress, and the stranger said, with confidence,—

"In the service, I see! We should be glad of your presence, as there is likely to be a storm, and we may lose our way on this wild plain! We will also light our coach-lamps here!"

The horses were now fully reined up; and the face of a beautiful girl was put out to get a view of the shepherd's cot and those who were about it. Andrew took the light from his wife's hand, which still trembled from the recent excitement, and drew near the phæton to assist the coachman in lighting up; but as he did so, he said, with a spirit of lordly hospitality instinctive in his fine nature,—

"It would be safer for you and the young lady to lay by till morning; or, at least, till this storm is over. There is not another dwelling for three miles."

"Our carriage, good fellow, is a good inn for a night," answered the gentleman, courteously. "We can shut all in and ride it out! As for that gentleman on horseback, he had better accept your offer."

Andrew was about to answer, "Not for all the gold of the East should he sleep beneath my roof," but his wife pulled his arm; for she feared that it would be dangerous for her husband to increase the anger of the evil horseman against him.

"Be quiet, Andrew dear. You don't know but with his pistols he may kill you yet. For *my* sake be quiet. What a sweet, noble face the young lady has, to be sure!" she added, gazing with womanly admiration upon the features of the fair girl in the carriage, upon which the coach-lights shone brilliantly. Masses of the most lustrous auburn hair fell with the profusion of nature's unstudied grace about her beauteous neck and oval face; while, from beneath fringes of the darkest, silkiest lashes, shone forth a pair of bright, glorious eyes.

"I will thank you for a tumbler of water," she said, in a richly-keyed and noble voice, to Hetty, smiling upon her as if struck by her rustic beauty.

"You will hardly find a tumbler here, Claudine," said the gentleman, pleasantly.

Hetty soon appeared with a brown mug of water, and held it towards the lady, who, as she extended her white small hand, said,—

"Why, what a frightened look you have, child. and see, you are spilling the water upon my hand; yours trembles so!"

"Oh, we have been *so* frightened, my lady," answered Hetty, looking timidly to where Brinsley sat in his saddle, with his servant also mounted near his side, as if both were waiting to see the carriage off. Brinsley had his hand still on his pistol, and was closely watching the shepherd's family; and this they felt, or they would have warned the two travelers of the dangerous character of the horseman, and of his servant.

But Captain Oakes did not so closely and suspiciously watch them that he did not see and appreciate at a glance the high style of beauty and extraordinary loveliness of the young lady. He could not refrain his eyes from gazing upon her; but upon his face was fixed eyes more penetrating than his own—the eyes of phrenzied jealousy and despair, and of madness.

"I thank you, (what is your name?) for the water, my pretty lass!" said the lady.

"Hetty, if it please you," answered the shepherdess, with a courtesy.

"What wild-looking, yet beautiful female is that?"

"A gypsy, ma'am. They say she is crazed! Indeed, she says that—Oh, mercy! She has killed him!"

This exclamation was caused by the loud report of a pistol. Katharine, seeing her false husband regarding the handsome stranger, and knowing he was preparing to accompany the phæton containing her, seized with a sudden lunacy, she bounded towards him with the lightness of a lynx, wrested his pistol from his hand, and aiming at his heart, drew the trigger. For a moment all was excitement. The rearing of the carriage horses; the cries of the females; the loud, amazed voice of the gentleman; the curses of Brinsley Oakes, who was untouched by the unsteady aim of the hand which held the weapon, with the calling of the coachman to quiet his horses, all presented a scene strange and alarming.

"Let us fly from this place, dear father," said the young lady.

"True. Drive on, sir! This house is a den of assassins!" cried Brinsley, spurring up, and anxious to alarm the inmates of the phæton, that they might not delay; for he feared every moment from Andrew an exposure of the relations held by him to the "gypsy woman," as Hetty termed his hapless and injured wife.

"'Tis better to go forward and risk the storm; I would rather trust the lightnings than pistol-bullets!"

The driver gave rein to his horses and the phæton dashed onward, and was closely followed by the officer and his mounted slave. In a few moments the dwelling was lost to the eyes of the gentleman as he leaned out of the window to look back; and away the party went at full speed across the dark plain, while ever and anon the thunder burst above their heads; and by the flash of the lightning the vast desolation of the plain was momentarily revealed, increasing the idea of loneliness.

The constant flashes from the cloud that was beetling darkly over their heads like a vast and awful precipice, enabled them to see their road, which was of a lighter hue than the rest of the prairie. Few words were spoken by those in the carriage; and Brinsley, who rode by the side of the window, was too much absorbed in recalling the late events at the shepherd's to be in a mood for conversing. Once the gray-haired gentleman said—

"Sir, you have a fine horse under you! and I am glad you and your man can keep up with us; for everything depends on reaching Salisbury before the storm comes down upon us. These winds howl across the plain like a pack of Siberian wolves."

"We shall be in the town in half an hour, sir," answered the captain, and rode on in silence.

By-and-by the gentleman again spoke:

"Who fired that pistol, and at whom?"

"A mad woman. It was aimed at me."

"At you, sir?"

"Yes. She fancied I was—to tell the truth—that I was her husband; and because I declined the honor, she sought to take my life with one of my own holster-pistols."

"It was a wonderful escape. Robbers and gypsies harbor there, I suppose?"

"Yes;—a dangerous place."

"I saw the gypsy woman, father; and though she did not seem to notice me, I could perceive that she was a superb and splendid creature, with all her haggard air and indifferent dress."

"But what ho!—Why do you stop?" demanded the gentleman of Pompey, who had galloped on ahead with his master's orders to see that there were no obstructions in the road before the track of the carriage.

"Loss 'em way, massa," replied the African. "No road here. Deep ditch and water!"

"A fortunate escape!" said Brinsley, after riding forward and looking for himself. "The road turns this ravine. As we were going we should have plunged into it at top speed. It was lucky the lightning enabled my man to see it in time. Follow! I will keep round the hollow; and we must ride slower, for we must not peril the life of the young lady. The rain is already falling."

The remainder of this night's ride was one of peril. The storm burst upon them ere they had half crossed the plain, and a bridge which they should have crossed when they reached it, was so deeply merged by the sudden swell of the waters, that it was impossible to cross it with the phæton. The winds increased in violence, and the rain fell heavier, accompanied by sharp hail; and every moment's delay would only increase the danger, unless they saw fit to pass the night in the carriage.

"Sir," said Brinsley, bending in at the carriage-window, "your horses will not take the bridge; and could you force them on, they would be swimming before they had gone ten yards, and the current would sweep them and the carriage down stream, and you would both perish!"

"What can be done?"

"Leave the carriage here, and swim the torrent upon your horses; and, in ten minutes after, we will be safe in an inn of the suburbs."

"You speak like a soldier, sir, to whom such passages are familiar and common-place. Sir, if I could swim one of my horses across, my daughter could not!"

"I fear not, father! Any risk rather than remain here all the night, exposed to this howling and terrible tempest; for even the glass of the coach is no protection now, shattered by the hail as they are!"

"If the young lady will trust herself to my charge, I will see her safely over. It is but a hundred yards, and I have swum the Ganges, with a Sepoy behind me."

"We must trust you," said the old gentleman. "What do you say, Claudine?"

"If he will take charge of me, and is sure of his horse, and that he will not endanger his own life!"

"My horse is strong and intelligent, and can take us over with ease."

"Thank you, sir! I will take one of the horses, and the coachman the other, leaving the carriage."

The horses were soon taken out of the harness, and, with only the headstalls, they were mounted severally by these two; while Captain Oakes received the young lady upon his saddle—the holsters affording her a firm seat.

"Pompey, swim your horse by my rein, on the lower side, and keep my horse's head up stream all the time, so that if my fair burden prevents me from guiding him, you can do it."

The next moment the four horses were all battling with the flood! It was a fearful contest! The horses, and the human souls they bore, felt that they were struggling for life and safety! Not a word was spoken, save, from time to time, as they swam, the captain's voice could be heard:

"More up stream! Head more up, sir! Steady all, thus!"

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE NEW YORK LADIES.

As it is generally supposed to be an advantage to be able

"To see ourselves as others see us,"

the following extravagant and somewhat spiteful description of "New York Ladies," by an English gentlewoman, will doubtless be read with eagerness by the entire sex in America. The lady says:—

"A great deal has been said in praise of the 'beauties' who are to be met with in Broadway; indeed, I have heard it asserted, even by Englishmen, that there are more beautiful faces to be seen during a walk through that street than in any other place in the world. One reason for this may be, that there are *more* female faces to be seen; for it is only in American cities that you can see the principal streets literally thronged with ladies; and it would indeed be strange if amongst all these numbers many were not to be found possessed of a sufficient degree of attraction to justify these encomiums. In Broadway, during the fashionable period of the day, ladies in parties of two and three may be met with every second; and as their complexions are generally good, and their dress at least not deficient in showiness, their *tout ensemble* is often sufficiently attractive. The total absence of all appearance of shyness in these perambulating ladies may also partly account for some of the admiration that has been so liberally bestowed upon them; but, whatever the cause, they certainly arrogate to themselves the palm of beauty, and I have not often heard their claim to it disputed; it is, however, equally true, that the reign of their charms is as short as it is brilliant. In America, it would be absurd to talk of a lady possessing a single attraction after thirty; so accustomed are they in this country to witness the early decline of youth and loveliness. During their daily promenades, the New York ladies are rarely attended by a gentleman, and never by a servant. It is, perhaps, to this remarkable independence of character and habits that they are indebted for the perfect self-possession and total absence of shyness which must be obvious to every one. To many, this would destroy the effect of half the charms they possess. Not so, I imagine, with their own countrymen, for I have heard them boast of this very characteristic as a proof of the perfect freedom from prejudice on the part of the ladies of their country, and also of their conviction that there was no reason for them to be 'ashamed of themselves.' The dress of the New York ladies is generally overdone, gaudy, and inappropriate; it is also costly and extravagant to the greatest degree."

PROFANE SWEARING.

Young people should be carefully guarded against acquiring a habit of repeatedly invoking their Maker's name on occasions the most trivial. Those who are most guilty of it are, from habit, hardly conscious when they do it, and are not aware of the sin; and for both these reasons, without the admonitions of faithful friendship, are little likely to discontinue it. There is, perhaps, hardly any sin so frequently committed, so seldom repented of, or so little guarded against. On the score of impropriety, too, it is additionally offensive, as being utterly repugnant to female delicacy, which is invariably shocked at swearing in a man. Now this species of profaneness is not only swearing, but perhaps swearing of the worst sort; as it is a direct breach of an express command, and offends against the very letter of that law, which says, *thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.* It offends against delicacy and good breeding; for those who commit it little think of the pain they are inflicting on the sober mind, which is deeply wounded when it hears the Holy Name it loves dishonored, and it is as contrary to good breeding to give pain, as it is to true piety to be profane. How would you like to hear the honored name of a revered parent or departed friend bandied about with unfeeling familiarity and indecent levity, or at best thrust into every pause of speech as a vulgar expletive? Does not your affectionate heart recoil at the thought? And yet the hallowed name of your truest Benefactor, your Heavenly Father, your best friend, is treated with an irreverence, a contempt, a wantonness, of which you cannot bear the very thought or mention of treating a human friend

"A SHADOW LIKE AN ANGEL."

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

He crossed my path with curls of golden brown—
A hue that seldom on my vision beams;
Yet blackest lashes heavily drooped down
Above his glorious blue eyes' depth of dreams.
His form was slight—but, oh, his was a face
Well worthy of the marble gods of Greece;
And his an air that blent etherial grace
With manly dignity—but let this cease.

For what can words paint half so bright as he?
And who can dream the radiance I would tell?
Unless they'd chance to stand and gaze like me,
Then turned and gazed again—but 'tis as well.
For though they said he was of mortal mold,
And though he did not vanish through the air,
And leave the adoring bosom faint and cold,
He passed as angels might—nor seemed less fair.

I had not seen aught like to him before,
And may not see such wond'rous charms again;
And yet I bless thee, Heaven, though evermore
I sigh for such a form, and sigh in vain.
For that one draught of youthful loveliness
Soothed half the fatal thirsting none may share—
Ah, though I met his gaze but once, I bless—
For a strange earnestness was dreaming there.

He's gone—the years too surely oft have passed
Since his young beauty left my gaze. And now
Rude winds and southern suns are dark'ning fast
O'er the pure paleness of his cheek and brow.
And they have said some brilliant flash of fame,
Some glorious and evanescent gleam,
Might one day quiver over Percy's name—
But his lone life will be one mournful dream.

BELLE LOUISE.

THE GHOST OF AN OLD MAN'S YOUTH.

BY MARY W. STANLEY GIBSON.

CHAPTER I.

It seems strange to me, to sit here, on this bright Junemorning, when the sunshine is streaming into my room, and flowers and birds are everywhere around me; it seems strange to turn back to the years long since gone by, and speak of that bright and beautiful creature who came like a dream of fancy across my path, and who now molders away beneath the turf of the churchyard. But it must be done.

"There's a statue in my chamber, carved in other years for me—
From the memory of a lady, in a land beyond the sea.

In its niche I keep it hidden, by a veil from common eyes
But my own behold it ever, and its shade upon me lies.

Through the day it stands before me, and appals my shrinking sight,
And at night it grows so awful, that I cannot sleep for fright.

For when falls the ghostly moonlight, in the silence of my room,
And my spirit faints within me, as it hearkens for its doom,

'Tis no more the woman's statue, but the woman's self I see,
Pallid with her love and sorrow, and the death she died for me!

And, so strange her spell upon me, as she bends above my bed,
She becomes the wretched living, I the still more wretched dead!"

So it has been with me!

She sat on the stone steps of her stately home as I came up through the lime avenue. She was dressed in some soft fabric of rose color that fell around her in graceful waves, and on her neck, and arms, and bosom, sparkled the hereditary diamonds of her father's house. In her black hair was a single blood-red flower with dark green leaves—another in her hand was withering slowly. As all things withered, Belle Louise, when your fervid grasp was on them.

For a year I had loved this woman, in her strange beauty and loveliness; for a year I had been by her side each evening as the sun went down in the west—yet here, to-night, at my appointed hour, she sat in the place where I had often met her, utterly unconscious of me or my presence. Her large bright eyes were fixed upon the distant mountains, and her cheeks were painfully flushed, as if she was either angry or grieved. At first, I thought I would steal softly away and leave her to the thoughts that were evidently not of me—but then I remembered that on that night I was to hear my doom from those red lips—and I waited.

"Belle Louise?" I said, very softly.

She started, and turned toward me impatiently. But her eyes softened as they met mine, and rising, she gave me her white hand to kiss.

"So, it is you. I thought it must be near your time when I came and sat down here."

"Were you watching for me?" I asked, with eager delight.

She frowned, and lifted her head haughtily.

"Have I not often told you, Titian, that I never watch for any one's coming? I watched once—years ago—God help me!"

Her musical voice rung out like steel as she finished speaking. I knew to what she alluded. I had heard that Belle Louise, in the bloom of early girlhood, had been married to one she loved better than life. He was a soldier—young, brave, beautiful and jealous. They were not happy, although they loved. A mystery hung about the last days of their married life which had never been solved: but it was known that the young officer, after a brief absence in battle, was brought home dying, and only lived long enough to whisper a few words in the ear of his beautiful wife, which seemed to change her to stone. From that time she had been brilliant and reckless—but never the Belle Louise of old.

I waited till she was calm again, and then I took her hand once more in mine.

"Belle Louise," I said, "the time has come when I must speak. Since I first saw you here beneath these limes, one year ago, I have loved you madly. I told you so the other day. Now tell me if you will be my wife. If not—then, Belle Louise, I must leave you forever. I can stay by you no longer if you are not mine—wholly and entirely."

As I pronounced these words with all the fire of my soul, I saw her shudder and turn pale. She looked back at the dark stone house behind us.

"Titian, it is not a pleasant home, but I have sworn never to seek another. My husband"—she paused a moment—"whoever he may be, must share it with me. And life here is a curse, Titian, —a curse I could not draw down upon your young head."

"Do you love me, Belle Louise?"

"What do you think?" she answered, curtly.

"I think you do—*not!*"

What sudden light and bloom was this rising over her lovely face? What glance of fire was this in her dark bright eyes?

"There is not a lock of your fair hair that is not dearer than life to me!" she cried, passionately. "There is not a glance of your blue eyes that does not reach my very soul!"

"Belle Louise—what do I hear?" I stammered. "Is this you—you who have been so cold and distant to me for a year back. Can you love—and like this?"

"Like this, and a thousand times more, my darling! Love? I shall kill you with love if you take me! You will die in a frantic delirium of joy—beware, Titian—beware!"

"Then welcome death!" I cried, springing towards her. But she held me back a moment.

"But the home, Titian—are you willing to remain in this gloomy spot alone with me?"

"Love—I would dwell in torture if you were there beside me!"

She made no more resistance now. I held her in my arms, close to my beating heart—she who had kept me at a distance so long—I pressed my lips to hers, and felt an answering kiss—I wept tears of joy, and it was her red mouth that kissed them all away. I had her—I held her—in spite of fate. The eagle who soared so high above me had suddenly changed to a gentle dove and sunk upon my breast.

In one week Belle Louise was my wife!

For a time I knew what perfect happiness was. In those brief weeks of ecstacy I wish—oh, how I wish that I had died! Life had nothing more bright and beautiful to offer—and when we have drained the chalice of earthly joy, does it not always lie shattered at our feet?

The home of Belle Louise was, as she had said, a lonely and gloomy one. Its rooms were large, and dark, and grand,—but I always spoke under my breath while in them, and felt a nameless, inexplicable dread for one or two, for which I could not account It seemed to me as if some dark, mysterious deed had been done beneath the roof of the old house that had made it accursed forever. But when I said so, laughingly, one day, to my wife, she turned pale, and caught her breath quickly.

"There is nothing here that can ever have power to hurt *you*, Titian," she said, in a moment after, in the saddest of voices.

She was fond of sitting, at midnight, in the old parlor that looked out on the avenue, and playing "old tunes with the saddest of closes" on the harp beside the window. One night, some weeks after our marriage, we were sitting thus:—I, on a footstool beside her, with my arm around her waist. She sat looking down the avenue a moment, and then began a song I had never heard before. I never heard it but that once from mortal lips; and, though the melody so sad, and strange, and wild has burned itself upon my brain, the words have escaped me. I only know there was a refrain like this:

"Thy little child is at my knee—
His dark eyes look in vain for thee—
The roses bud and bloom again,
But when wilt thou come back to me?"

I listened in silence. I think it was the sweetest and saddest thing I ever heard. But, just as I was about to beg her to repeat it, I heard the galloping of a horse along the avenue beneath us.

"Who can it be, Belle Louise?" I said, as I rose to look out.

"I hear no one," she said, absently. "It must have been the wind."

"No, love—do you not hear it now? The steady gallop of a horse—strange that I can see no one. Ha! there he comes in sight."

Belle Louise shrieked, and turning, I saw her standing, pale as death, trying to steady herself by the trembling hand that fell upon the harp.

"My love!"

"No, no—don't come near me now," she said, hurriedly, motioning me away. "But tell me, if he comes nearer—how does he look."

"He is almost here—how strange!"

"What?"

"My darling, he is dressed——"

"As a cavalier, with long curls of fair hair falling down on his shoulders?" she cried, in a piercing voice.

"Yes."

"And carries a little child upon his knee, and looks always towards the house?"

"Yes, yes!"

"Oh, my God! I hoped to spare *you* this!" she cried, and throwing up her arms, fell heavily at my feet.

I raised her in my arms, and laid her on the couch at the farther end of the room. Returning, I looked after the horseman. He had vanished, as if the earth had opened and swallowed him. Perplexed and unhappy, I returned to Belle Louise, who had not fainted, and who was watching me anxiously. But she did not speak, and leaning heavily on my arm, went straight to her own room, and laid down in her bed.

I had always thought that nothing on earth should ever make me distrust Belle Louise. But this strange occurrence puzzled and pained me. I thought she had no confidence in me, and where confidence was not, I argued there could be no love. Who was this mysterious stranger, with the dark-eyed child, and why did she not tell her husband why his appearance shocked her so? Musing on these things, I walked the floor of the anteroom till I was tired, and then threw myself down upon a couch to sleep.

Through the half-open door Belle Louise had watched me anxiously. When she saw me do this, she started up in bed, and cried out,—

"Titian, love, come here!"

I went and stood by her in silence.

"Every night since our marriage your head has rested on my breast," she said, in a low voice. "Are you angry with your wife? What is it you would have, Titian?"

"My wife's love and confidence," I answered, moodily.

She sighed, and sunk back upon her pillow. I turned away and walked into the next room again.

The wind blew cold and chilly from the terrace. I went to fasten a small glass door that led out there, when something in the little hall between fell to the floor from the wall. I picked it up, fastened the door, and went back to the light to see what I had found.

It was the portrait of a man younger than myself, with straight, regular features, sunny hair, and the coldest, most vindictive and cruel blue eyes I ever saw. Yet around his mouth a beautiful kind smile was lingering, and his whole face looked good and noble. It was only in the eyes that soul and sense spoke out, and showed him as he was—a devil! The little dark-eyed child stood by his knee, with a lily in its hand.

I carried the picture straight to the bedside of Belle Louise.

"I found it in the passage that leads to the terrace," I said sternly. "When you explain this mystery, I will take you to my heart once more. I love you as madly as ever."

She had groaned, and covered her eyes, when she saw the picture; but as I spoke she looked up at me.

"Never till then, Titian?"

I shook my head, because I could not trust myself to speak.

"My love—my love, oh, come to me!"

I tried to be firm. I tried to turn away. But as she sat there, with her long black hair falling over her shoulders—with her soft, white arm extended to draw me to her breast, with her beautiful face full of pride, and passion, and entreaty—my resolution failed. I hurled the portrait from me, without another glance at the smiling face, and sank into her arms.

"Belle Louise," I murmured, "I told you once I could dwell in torments so you were beside me. I believe it now."

"Nay, love," she answered, kissing my forehead, "you will live in joy instead. But never, never doubt me again, as you have done to-night. You shall know all soon. Till then will you trust me, whatever may happen?"

"With perfect faith."

I was helpless while her arms were around me, and her beautiful face so close to mine, and could not choose but believe in her, in spite of all. She smiled at my answer, and bending over me, kissed my eyelids, till they shut heavily, and I slept, more like a happy infant than like a wearied and anxious man.

CHAPTER II.

We went away from the old house the next day—Belle Louise and I. The servants remained behind. For them there were no spectral sights and sounds—no fair-haired cavalier galloping up the lime avenue—no little child smiling at his knee. But Belle Louise and I wandered over the continent for a year, and only returned when her failing health made it necessary that she should have the comforts of her own house.

I knew that Belle Louise was not so well and strong as when we went away. But I had seen her day after day, and the change was not so manifest to me. When I heard the low whisper that ran around the group of servants, as I took her in my arms from the carriage, and bore her up the steps,—when I saw the concern and anxiety visible in their faces, and noticed how her dark bright beauty had faded away, for the first time—the thought came over me that she might die! Die? What would the world be to me then? I would not harbor the thought. But, with her leaning on my arm, I went up to our old rooms, and bade her welcome home again.

She seemed gloomy, and ill at ease. But as the evening came on she grew calmer. I had her harp brought up from the rooms below, and she sung the old songs to me—every one. When she had finished she sat with her head leaning over my shoulder, touching the strings of the harp idly with her fingers now and then. The full, deep chords sounded through the room like voices speaking, and the moonlight fell upon the floor, making everything around as light as day.

"Shall I ring for lights, Belle Louise?" I asked.

"No—I prefer the moonlight. I am glad to be at home, Titian, and I believe we can be happy here now. We have had one happy year—nothing can come between us now."

Even as she spoke she started slightly, and I felt a vague sensation of being a long way from her—a feeling as if something was sitting there between us, and had removed me to a distance.

"Titian, is any one in the room but you and me?" she asked, faintly.

"No one, Belle Louise."

"Nothing here between us—between these chairs?"

"Nothing," I answered, courageously; for though I felt a nameless dread freezing my own blood, I would not alarm her.

She shuddered, and came nearer to me. Now the Presence seemed to be removed, and I could hold her close to my heart again. But as I bent down to kiss her, I distinctly heard a laugh—low, but clear and malicious—at the farther end of the room.

"Titian, Titian—he is here!"

Her white, despairing face emboldened me.

"Who is it that laughs?" I asked, sternly.

A cold wind seemed sweeping by us, and the strings of the harp trembled to the refrain she had sung a year before:

"Thy little child is at my knee,
His dark eyes look in vain for thee;
The roses bud and bloom again,
But when wilt thou return to me?"

With one accord we turned and looked at the portrait of the young cavalier, which still hung upon the wall behind us. The moonbeams fell full upon the smiling features, and the cold, blue eyes. I could have sworn the face worked and changed as we gazed.

"Take me away—take me away!" gasped Belle Louise.

I caught her up in my arms, and hurried from the haunted room, down into the oaken parlor beneath, where lights and a pleasant fire were burning. When, in that more cheerful apartment, we had shaken off the horror that oppressed us, I turned to my wife, and took her hands in mine.

"Belle Louise—since I have your sorrow, is it not right for me to know its cause? Confide in me, I implore it of you."

"You shall know all," she said, after a moment's hesitation. "Yes—though I feel assured that you will scorn and despise me, I will tell you."

She turned her chair from me, and sat a little in the shadow.

"Titian, you know I married when I was a mere child—almost too young to know the meaning of the word love."

"I know it, Belle Louise."

"Yet I did love my husband. I would always have loved him, had he allowed it. But he was a tyrant—a cold, capricious, exacting tyrant," she added, raising her voice, as if to bid defiance to the shade that lurked around us, "and I, for a time, was his slave. Judge for yourself," she said, proudly, "how well fitted I was to play such a part. By degrees I sickened of it. I loathed him, too. I loathed the very beauty which had won my heart, and the graces which had captivated my fancy. I was in deadly danger, and no hand was stretched out to save me!"

She was silent for a time. I, too, had no power to speak.

"He had a friend," she continued, "as gentle as he was haughty—as kind as he was cold—as tender as he was cruel. I was thrown daily in his society. I looked up into his dark face with positive relief when I turned from the fair, treacherous beauty of my husband. At last I loved him—and he loved me! Judge what my husband's rage must have been when he discovered all!

"He was on the battle-field that day, and before nightfall he had met his foe. There were few words between them; but his sword was red with the heart's blood of my lover, and my little child, when he came back to me. And on his death-bed he hissed the tidings in my ear. 'I leave my bitter curse with you,' he said, 'and never in life shall you be free from me! With our child I will haunt your steps forever!'

"Titian, you see how he has fulfilled his oath. I have told you all now. It only remains for me to die!"

She cowered back in the depths of the great chair in which she was sitting, and covered her face with her hands. I leaned over her chair and kissed her bowed head. She looked up with a strange glance of hope, and surprise, and joy.

"Titian—can you mean——"

"Belle Louise, you have never sinned against me—never wronged or injured me, in any way?"

"Never, never—by my hopes of Heaven!"

"Then to me you are as dear as ever—still the Belle Louise I loved, and wooed, and won."

"Oh, my husband!"

It was the first time I had ever seen her weep. No longer proud and haughty, but as humble and penitent as a little child, she hid her face upon my breast. And as I drew her nearer, I felt that I had never loved her half so well before!

That night Belle Louise was taken suddenly ill. The family physician was sent for in urgent haste, and when he arrived, a cabinet council was held between him and two old female servants, from which I was excluded. A couch was brought down into the oaken parlor, and hastily prepared for my wife—through the half-open door I saw them lay her on it, cold and pale as if she had been already dead, but they would not let me stay beside her, and I had no resource but to pace up and down the long hall like one distracted.

Just as the hall clock struck ten, a sound broke upon my ear that thrilled every nerve within me. It was the cry of an infant!

"Belle Louise! Belle Louise!" I cried, and rushing to the door, I was about to burst it from its hinges, when it opened, and the doctor came out. He grasped my hand and smiled.

"Sir, allow me to congratulate you. You are a father, and your wife and child are doing well."

My wife and child! How strange the words sounded to me!

"Come," he said, drawing me in, and closing the door, "if you will be very quiet, and not agitate your wife, you shall see her."

He led me up to the bed, where Belle Louise, having heard my voice, had already put back the curtains, and was looking anxiously out at me. I fell upon my knees beside her, and kissed her. With an angelic smile, she drew my head nearer, and showed me, nestling in her breast, a little child with sunny hair, and blue eyes, half shut, as if in sleep.

"My wife! My child!"

The words came easily now—they were strange and unwonted no more. And as I clasped my treasures in my arms, and felt the little unconscious hand of the infant lying against my cheek, where Belle Louise had placed it—I knew then, as I know now, that it was the purest, and brightest, and happiest moment of my life!

"Mother and child were doing well." There was no need of attendance during the night, and though a servant slept in the adjoining room, to be within call, I was the real guardian of that quiet couch. I sat beside it till the light breathing of Belle Louise, and the relaxed limbs of my boy, showed me that they were sleeping soundly. Then I replenished the dying fire, trimmed the lamp, and began to read.

With the heat of the fire, and the stillness of the room, an inexplicable drowsiness stole over me. I felt it coming on, and tried to resist it by drinking glass after glass of the cold water that stood beside me. But with every moment I grew more unconscious, and when I would have risen to pace the room, my limbs refused their office, and sunk beneath me. "I will close my eyes one moment, and the feeling will pass away," I said to myself. Leaning my head back on the velvet chair, in that one moment I was far in the world of dreams.

It was no natural and healthful sleep that had thus seized upon me. I have since found that not one in the household was conscious of what happened during that dead hour of the night; no mortal ear heard the prayer, the entreaty, the groan of mental agony, if such there were, of Belle Louise!

With those who loved her best, beside her, she pleaded in vain for help and pity—with one who would have periled life itself to save her, almost within the reach of her poor pale hand, she was powerless to summon him to her aid; even with her young child lying in her bosom, she could not resist the spirit that was mightier than she, but put away the soft clinging arms from around her neck, looked her last upon love, and hope, and happiness, and in the pauses of the most awful storm that had ever poured its wrath upon the old stone house—went forth, alone, to meet her doom!

I woke from that sound sleep as suddenly as I had fallen into it. A terrible storm was roaring outside the house, and the tall trees that grew in the avenue creaked and groaned as if they were coming to the earth. I built up the fire once more, cast a glance of love towards the quiet bed, and composed myself easily in my chair again. Suddenly that ghostly melody rung through the silent room.

"Thy little child is at my knee,
His dark eyes look in vain for thee;
The roses bud and bloom again,
But when wilt thou return to me?"

I started to my feet, and, just at that moment, a tall figure, dressed in white, stood upon the threshold of the inner room. It was the old servant, who held a lamp in her hand, and came towards me, quaking with terror.

"Master, I have had a terrible dream, and I dare not stay alone."

"Come in, then," I said, in a low voice; "but make no noise, or you will wake your mistress."

"Ah, it is a strange old house, and there have been strange things done in it," she said, shaking her head. "How the storm roars; there was just such another the night Colonel Warburton died."

"You mean the first husband of your mistress?"

"Yes. Pretty dear, how can she sleep so soundly through it all?"

She put down her lamp, and went softly towards the bed to arrange its drapery, which had fallen down on one side. But as she did so she looked hastily within the curtains, and turned a white, scared face towards me that made my heart stand still.

"Woman, what is it?" I said, hoarsely.

"Master, the child is here, safe and sound; but oh, in the name of Heaven, where is my poor mistress?"

The ghostly music—my strange and sudden sleep—it flashed upon me in a moment, and I could not stir. At last I snatched the light, and hurried up the stairs, followed closely by the old servant, who seemed to know instinctively where I was going. I flung open the door of our chamber, and there, standing beneath that accursed portrait, with her arms crossed upon the marble mantle-piece, and her head bent down upon them, was Belle Louise! As I first crossed the threshold something seemed to move and glide away from her side—a tall, dark shadow, on which I dared not look.

I caught the portrait from its place upon the wall, and trampled it beneath my feet. Again that mocking laugh rang through the room, and at its sound my wife raised her drooping head, and put her black hair from her pale face.

"Belle Louise, do you know me?" I asked, anxiously.

She smiled a kind of weary smile, and turned towards me. I held out my arms, she made one step, staggered, reeled, and would have fallen if I had not caught her. I hurried down into the oaken parlor, and laid her beside her child, but her heart was cold and still, and when I called her, for the first time she did not hear my voice! Belle Louise was dead!

As I sat beside her, in a dumb silence, the old servant came nearer me.

"Take up the child," I said, "and let it be cared for—only keep it out of my sight forever."

She obeyed—but as she lifted the infant, she paused, and looked towards me.

"What is it?"

"Sir—the child is with its mother," she said, with a pitying look.

I was alone! I laid the little form upon that cold, still bosom, and buried my face in my hands. Blighted bud and broken flower were lying then together! And I—oh, what was I that I should be spared to tell the tale?

HOTEL LIFE.

BY ONE WHO KNOWS ALL ABOUT IT.

I know of no solitude like that of a large hotel, conducted on the European plan. At other houses, be they ever so immense, there is generally a reunion of guests at some hour of the day, and faces grow familiar till you watch them eagerly, and try to read their histories in each quiet look and movement. To such as have pleased your fancy you cannot feel quite a stranger. You follow them in imagination to their chambers—you go out with them into the different places of amusement—you wonder, dreamily, whom they love and whom they hate, and if they ever have a lingering thought of you. By and by, your own solitary figure awakens an interest in their hearts. You see them glance each evening at the dinner table, to see if your place is yet filled, and you feel, with a kindly glow at your heart, that they would miss you if it were vacant. You meet their children in the halls and on the stairs, and lay your hand kindly on their bright heads, with an inward blessing on their parents, with whom you have never spoken. So it goes on, day by day; and when at last you leave your pretty little room, and become a wanderer again, you think of those people with a strange choking in your throat, and something rising to your eyes that is very like a tear. And you feel certain that though you may never meet again in this world, they will sometimes recall your memory as kindly as you remember them. But in the other house, how different. Shut up in your lonely room, you hear all the bustle of life around you, and know that you are not expected to share in it. You hear the voices of children at play—you hear people talking, and servants going up and down in the passages—yet, if you open your door and look out, what do you see? Only the chambermaid sitting quietly over her sewing at the foot of the stairs, and a man bending over his desk, and writing rapidly, in the hall beyond. The voices still sound upon your ear, but they seem afar off. The place seems haunted, and a shuddering dread creeps over you.

You may lie and sleep, if you choose, till the hour of noon, as no one will dream of interrupting you. The chambermaid awaits your summons in perfect tranquility, and seems equally willing to attend to your room at nine in the morning or nine at night, as the case may be. She is possessed of a dumb spirit, too, and goes about her work so much like an automaton, when you are in the room, that it would be a relief to you to throw the book you are reading at her head, by way of breaking the charm that seals her lips.

There is no gong sounded here—no cheerful summons to our different meals; and he who likes to hear "that tocsin of the soul—the dinner bell," must needs take up his quarters elsewhere. Once in a while you hear the rattle of plates, and knives, and forks; but they are only on the trays of the servants, who are hurrying to the different rooms. By-and-by your own dinner comes. Everything that could tempt the appetite of an epicure is there. The soup and fish are excellent, the game fine, and the dessert without reproach. But when the silent waiter places the dessert upon the table, and takes his departure—how lonely you feel. There is no sparkling fire before which you can draw up your chair—nothing to warm the room but a grated steam-pipe, that reminds you strongly of prison bars and gratings. You saunter up and down the room, and look out of the window. The day is dark, and, dreary, and rainy—the streets are muddy, and the building opposite seems the loneliest place you have ever seen. You go back to your dessert with a sigh. But you soon bury your face in your hands; and as the room grows dark, and the gas in the hall outside is lighted, and falls around you in a softened radiance, all the sorrows and disappointments of embittered life come up before you, and you are ready to weep, in a kind of miserable pity for your own inexpressible wretchedness.

Saints preserve us! Give me a home in a genuine country "tavern," if you will—where the great "square room" has a fire large enough to roast an ox, and the doors and windows plenty of cracks to let the fresh air in; where the landlady says "Yes" and "No" to all your questions, and the landlord has no peace till he knows just who you are, where you came from, where you are going, and what you are going to do. But save me, for the sake of my wandering wits and reason, from the heavy trial of a perpetual residence in one of these living tombs!

LOVE AND MARRIAGE IN PERSIA.

When the Persians make love, they use many stratagems to convince their mistresses that they are faithful. In the ardor of their affection, they burn themselves on some part of their bodies, by setting fire to their clothes, and take care that the scorching be on a part that is visible, and in this state they present themselves to the object of their affections. If they accept them, the ladies are always careful to furnish these ardent lovers with fillets and scarfs of silk to bind up the wounds which they have received in the wars of the "God of Love;" and they are most esteemed who put themselves to the greatest pain.

The Persians marry many wives, which they may part with; the nobility have as many as they please, but the commonalty exceed not seven. When the day is appointed for the marriage of a great man, the relations and friends meet at his house, dressed in his livery; if they are not particular friends they dress as they please, and always as fine as they can. When it is bed-time, two men conduct the bridegroom to the bride's chamber, she entering by another door. The company, in the meantime, continue dancing. Should the man not be satisfied with his bride, he often rejects her in the presence of the company, after he has given her a sum of money, and her relations instantly depart with her.

THE MIND.—The mind has a certain vegetative power, which cannot be wholly idle. If it is not laid out and cultivated into a beautiful garden, it will of itself shoot up in weeds or flowers of a wild growth.

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AN OUTRAGEOUS FACT.

With all our boasted independence, and our real cleverness as a people, our pre-eminent subserviency to foreign fashions, foreign literature, foreign labor and foreign standards of taste, in many directions, is an outrageous fact in our national history. It is scarcely too much to say that we have, as yet, hardly the shadow of a nationality in act or feeling. If we have ranked in the forefront of nations, it has been by reason of our territorial extent, our accumulation of wealth and population, and a somewhat pretentious bluster about our Americanism, rather than because we have demonstrated our right to such rank by any real, all-pervading American spirit. In one direction our subserviency *has* run to the extreme—it could have gone no further. Nor is it by any means relaxed now. If it is tolerable that our labor should despoil itself by patronizing foreign industry, and our country keep its own vast resources closed by consuming the poorer, or no better products of other lands, and the American people thereby be made the proppers of the Old World's thrones and treasures, and crafts and despotisms, it is intolerable that an American article, in every way equal or superior to whatever of its kind the world can produce, cannot be offered in the American market with equal chances of appreciation and sale, if it bear an American brand.

Such a fact seems too humiliating to American pride and patriotism to be possible, yet it is an existing and universal fact, all through the land. We could point to large printing houses in this city that do little else, and whose proprietors have made, and are making fortunes by printing *fac-similes* of foreign labels and trade marks, to be put on American articles by American manufacturers, because the American people prefer the article that bears a foreign brand. Scores of trade and manufacturing classes have for years been making and selling wholly under false labels, pleading, in justification of the commercial lie, the shameful fact that only the foreign stamped article will command the market.

Nearly all the finer perfumery and toilet articles consumed in this country, are made here, but are sold under Paris, or Birmingham, or other foreign labels. Nearly all the foreign stamped writing paper is made here—the manufacturers being unblushing enough to boast of the "dodge." Thousands of men and women are in this city making hats, and bonnets, and countless fineries, that are all, on completion, labeled "Paris." Our broadcloths, our cottons and silks, our cutlery, and our boots and gloves, must take on the foreign mark, or they stand only a second chance. And yet, in grandly useful things we have proved ourselves inventive and skillful beyond rivalry. The world acknowledges thus much, but *we* have not sufficient national pride to stand on our own feet, and vindicate what is true of, and due to, ourselves.

In many departments—in nearly all that relates to labor-saving machinery and "fixings"—Americans can compete with the world in excellence of products. But of what avail is this to our national credit, while we can sell nothing, however good, if it be an American in competition with a foreign article? This slavish imitation of the Old World—of peoples and industries inferior to ours—is abominable. It is a vast self-fraud and robbery, for which the Old World laughs at us while she pockets the profits. We must have French costume with French materials; our tables must be spread with "Irish linen" and British crockery and cutlery; our floors, if carpeted luxuriously, must be covered by foreign looms; our windows must be hung with foreign laces; our foreign wines must sparkle in foreign goblets; our aristocratic amusements must be foreign; and if there be a belle in the land, she must seek, as her first choice for a husband, some Baron Blumfusky or Count Blow-my-nose-off, from "abroad." Really, we have run this sort of servility "a-muck." When shall we have an end of it, and reinstate, once more and forever, those better days when simpler habits prevailed, and Americans were not ashamed to prefer things equally good, because they were American?

GIVE US GOOD MEN.

"Give us good men for office," cries a contemporary, "and it matters little what party triumphs." So say we; and as elections and office-holding have to do with the constant welfare of our country, we may venture a non-partizan word on this point without transgressing the Ledger's bounds. Without hoisting a sectarian banner, we feel it our duty and privilege to appeal in behalf of religion, and so, without being partizan, we esteem it a duty and privilege to plead for good morals, and sound principles, in politics and government. Give us righteous public servants, and all will be well. Under such, parties will war, and demagogues rage, in vain. When we say righteous, we mean intelligent, practical, good men—men selected, not for their popularity with a class or faction, but for their fitness for public trust.

It was the selection of such men as subordinates that enabled the great conquerors to subdue the world Even despotisms have owed their success to the *fitness* of their agents. Our government—federal, State, and municipal—is, or ought to be, a plain, practical, common-sense thing. If other than that, it is a sure sign that it is weak, corrupt, and bad. Give us for office men who, sinking selfish considerations, will only seek to promote the highest interests of the community and State, and the mad race of parties and office-seekers will cease. Our offices should seek for noblest occupants, instead of being battled for, as now, by men only ambitious to seize them as places of power and plunder. We want a recurrence of the "good old times"—good at least for the simple, earnest zeal of our fathers, who had not yet learned that offices were desirable for their "spoils."

For legislators, we want men who will give us fewer, and simpler, and juster statutes—men who cannot be swayed by castes or classes, but who will care only for the common weal. For executives, we want intelligent, honest, faithful men And this is all we want—so simple is the machinery of good government. And we should have this, if all the man-loving and God-fearing among us would do their political duty, and take the matter of elections into their own hands. Why will they not, since good government is desirable to all good men. "Righteousness exalteth a nation," says the Book of books, and the "rulers" so-called, are the foremost signals of a nation's character. Good men—yes, give us good men, and that means essentially *fit* men, for office, and it will matter little what party triumphs.

* * *

EDUCATE, EDUCATE!

This is the tocsin which, more than all others, we delight to sound: "Educate, educate!" Not in any narrow or exclusive sense of the word, but in the widest sense. Educate physically, mentally, morally, religiously—every way! Expand the mind, expand the heart, expand the soul! There is no fear of educating the people too much, so long as their teachers, in youth or in age, are wise and good.

Nature may have been bountiful. She may have been even profuse to prodigality, and shown seeming partiality in her bestowals of intellectual capacity. But still it requires education to call forth and direct aright the powers of the mind. A few, among such as have neglected educational appliances when young, have made up for their loss, in some degree, when grown to manhood or womanhood. But they depended on education, at last. It may have been mainly self-education—that is, education without much assistance from personal teachers—but it was education of *some* sort, after all.

When, on a certain occasion, Dyonysius, the Syracusian tyrant, insisted on being instructed in geometry, by Archimedes, according to some easier and more rapid method than that in vogue, the philosopher is said to have replied that there was "*no royal road to science.*"

We have seen that nature cannot enable us to dispense with instruction. The same is true of fortune. Wealth may pay for education. It can buy no substitute. Educate, then, educate, educate!

* * *

"I WON'T!"

That's frank and honest! It gives us the simple truth, expressed by the right word in the right place. There is in it no such pretence as "I can't," so often resorted to by young people. "Can't" is only *cant*—cant of the worst kind, because a whining falsehood It mostly *means* "won't," but tries to conceal the truth with prevaricating and verbal dodges.

"Can't" is generally the voice of laziness—of want of courage, want of spirit, want of enterprise, want of will, want of every element that is manly or womanly. Where there is a will there is a way, with the proverb. "Can't," having no "will," of course finds no "way." Neither does "won't." But the latter has this advantage: it indicates that the do-nothing is not also a know-nothing—that he or she is aware that the fault lies at home. So there is *hope* for "won't." Perhaps it may give way to "will," and make all right at last. For "can't" there is generally no hope. There is none for the present, at any rate, and room to fear that there is none for the future.

Young men, and young women, who read this, are you unwilling to do what is required of you by your parent or your teacher?—what your own internal consciousness tells you is your duty? Own up, with honor bright, and *say* so it *is*. Say "*I won't.*" Attempt no cowardly lie, such as "I can't," when you know, in your souls, you haven't even *tried!*

* * *

VANITY OF DRESS.

How weak a foible is this! Could anything be more unworthy of a rational being? To see a person priding himself on his garments—their color, their texture, their cut, their fit, their cost—what could be more contemptible? It is well calculated to remind one of the fable of the sheep with the golden fleece: It vainly imagined itself better than its fellows of the fold and the pasture. But a few clips of the shearer undeceived it, by demonstrating that it was only a sheep, after all!

What have we to boast of in our garments after all?—taking the word in its fullest sense. Is it of our hat? Why, it has been worn by some humble animal before us! Is it our coat? That has been on the back of some sheep, which has not even had the honor of a golden fleece! Is it the boots in which youth struts so proudly, as if they were seven-leagued? They have come from some other calf! Is it the "feather in our cap," or in the bonnet of our wife, daughter, or sister? The ostrich had the first claim to wear it! Or it may have been stolen from the tail of some rooster, that never rose to even the dignity of a "fighting cock," and dyed to suit!

Pitiable, indeed, is that man or woman who yields to the vanity of dress, and prides himself or herself in "fine clothes." Surely the immortal mind, in its feeblest development, may find something more worthy of its own noble character, and high destiny, than this!

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

"FRESH LEAVES, BY FANNY FERN."

This little volume has just been laid upon our table. The publishers have done all they could for it, with regard to outward adorning. No doubt it will be welcomed by those who admire this lady's style of writing: we confess ourselves not to be of that number. We have never seen Fanny Fern, nor do we desire to do so. We imagine her, from her writings, to be a muscular, black-browed, grenadier-looking female, who would be more at home in a boxing gallery than in a parlor,—a vociferous, demonstrative, strong-minded horror,—a woman only by virtue of her dress. Bah! the very thought sickens us. We have read, or, rather, tried to read, her halloo-there effusions. When we take up a woman's book we expect to find gentleness, timidity, and that lovely reliance on the patronage of our sex which constitutes a woman's greatest charm. We do not wish to be startled by bold expressions, or disgusted with exhibitions of masculine weaknesses. We do not desire to see a woman wielding the scimetar blade of sarcasm. If she be, unfortunately, endowed with a gift so dangerous, let her—as she values the approbation of our sex—fold it in a napkin. Fanny's strong-minded nose would probably turn up at this inducement. Thank heaven! there are still women who *are* women—who know the place Heaven assigned them, and keep it—who do not waste floods of ink and paper, brow-beating men and stirring up silly women;—who do not teach children that a game of romps is of as much importance as Blair's Philosophy;—who have not the presumption to advise clergymen as to their duties, or lecture doctors, and savans;—who live for something else than to astonish a gaping, idiotic crowd. Thank heaven! there are women writers who do not disturb our complacence or serenity; whose books lull one to sleep like a strain of gentle music; who excite no antagonism, or angry feeling. Woman never was intended for an irritant: she should be oil upon the troubled waters of manhood—soft and amalgamating, a necessary but unobtrusive ingredient;—never challenging attention—never throwing the gauntlet of defiance to a beard, but softly purring beside it lest it bristle and scratch.

The very fact that Fanny Fern has, in the language of her admirers, "elbowed her way through unheard of difficulties," shows that she is an antagonistic, pugilistic female. One must needs, forsooth, get out of her way, or be pushed one side, or trampled down. How much more womanly to have allowed herself to be doubled up by adversity, and quietly laid away on the shelf of fate, than to have rolled up her sleeves, and gone to fisticuffs with it. Such a woman may conquer, it is true, but her victory will cost her dear; it will neither be forgotten nor forgiven—let her put that in her apron pocket.

As to Fanny Fern's grammar, rhetoric, and punctuation, they are beneath criticism. It is all very well for her to say, those who wish commas, semi-colons and periods, must look for them in the printer's case, or that she who finds ideas must not be expected to find rhetoric or grammar; for our part, we should be gratified if we had even found any ideas!

We regret to be obliged to speak thus of a lady's book: it gives us pleasure, when we can do so conscientiously, to pat lady writers on the head; but we owe a duty to the public which will not permit us to recommend to their favorable notice an aspirant who has been unwomanly enough so boldly to contest every inch of ground in order to reach them—an aspirant at once so high-stepping and so ignorant, so plausible, yet so pernicious. We have a conservative horror of this pop-gun, torpedo female; we predict for Fanny Fern's "Leaves" only a fleeting autumnal flutter.

Fanny Fern.

* * *

WHY WOMEN ARE UNHEALTHY.

Many of the physical evils—the want of vigor, the inaction of system, the languor and hysterical affections—which are so prevalent among the delicate young women of the present day, may be traced to a want of well-trained mental power and well-exercised self-control, and to an absence of fixed habits of employment. Real cultivation of the intellect, earnest exercise of the moral powers, the enlargement of the mind by the acquirement of knowledge, and the strengthening of its capabilities for effort, for endurance of inevitable evils, and for energy in combatting such as they may overcome, are the ends which education has to attain. Weakness but becomes infirmity. The power of the mind over the body is immense. Let that power be called forth; let it be trained and exercised, and vigor both of mind and body will be the result. There is a homely, unpolished saying, that "it is better to wear out than to rust out;" but it tells a plain truth—rust consumes faster than use. Better, a million times better, to work hard, even to the shortening of existence, than to sleep and eat away this precious gift of life, giving no other cognizance of its possession. By work or industry, of whatever kind it may be, we give a practical acknowledgment of the value of life—of its high intentions, of its manifold duties. Earnest, active industry is a living hymn of praise, a never-failing source of happiness; it is obedience, for it is God's great law for moral existence.

* * *

HOME MUSIC.

A house without music is like a nursery without children—silent, gloomy, and desolate. Music is the harmonic soul of life, breathed or suggested everywhere in nature, and only absent from the lips and hearts of those who are "fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils." The influences of music are not only soothing and delightful to the ear, but are refining, purifying, and exalting to the mind and heart. The soul lives its rarest hours in an atmosphere of melody and song, and we contemplate Paradise, not unfittingly, as realizing our supremest dream of felicity with its musical enchantments—its hymning seraphs, who "adore and burn" with extasies that can find utterance only in song. Universal experience attests that the habituation of childhood to pleasant music—as to the presence of flowers—is one of the surest means of softening down harsh tempers and evil passions, in the bud. Children cannot grow up rude and boisterous in the midst of harmony and beauty. Music at home is a recreation for the daughters, and an attraction for the sons. Make home bright, musical and joyous, and fewer will fly from it to the world's corrupting diversions and excitements.

* * *

A New Poem by Alexander Smith.—We have to thank our friends, Messrs. Ticknor & Fields, of Boston, for the very excellent new poem, "Change," by Alexander Smith, which they send us in advance of their own publication thereof. The poem will be found on our eighth page.

"THE GOOD OLD TIMES."

We hear much about the good old times, as we also do of the "good time coming." But we have more hope of the latter than we have love for the former. It would not be well for the world to go backward two hundred or two thousand years. There may have been some grand displays away back there, but a more universal good and splendor abide with our own age. Our race progresses in every respect—beyond question. This worship of the past has no basis beyond man's perpetual restlessness in the present. All over the earth men and women are eminently better off than they were one or ten generations gone by. They are more intelligent, have a better morality, enjoy better government and social state, and have ampler means of livelihood. He who doubts this has not studied history closely. Let us go back to our fatherland in the "golden days of good Queen Bess." It was one of England's best "old times" when Elizabeth ruled over her. Let us see how the English—our forefathers—got along then. Substantial diet was confined to persons of rank and wealth. Plowmen seldom got better than water and gruel. The food of laborers was coarse and deficient; their clothing was incomparably more so; their lodgings were rude, dirty and uncomfortable. The homes even of the wealthy were mostly destitute of glass windows and chimneys. The floors of peasant houses were bare clay. The ordinary fare of working men then would produce a riot in a pauper house now. The poorest with us wear some silks—the richest then could only command linen. Tea, coffee and sugar were unknown. "Common people" seldom ate meat of any kind—the rich had little but salt meats. As late as 1750, out of a population of six millions, in England and Wales, more than half subsisted on rye, barley and oats. And we are no farther removed from those times in all these things, than we are progressed beyond them in science, enterprise and arts. As compared with the human race now, the people of the Elizabethan age were poverty-stricken. The world was oppressed, ignorant, destitute, superstitious, rude, unsocial, and variously besotted. God forbid that we should fall back upon "the good old times." Let us be content with our golden age, or, if not content, struggle on for the still goldener "good time coming."

* * *

FANNY FERN'S NEW BOOK.

"Fresh Leaves," by Fanny Fern, has just been issued by Messrs. Mason Brothers, in a beautiful volume, at the low price of seventy-five cents. This work is one of the author's very best. It contains many of the pointed and pathetic stories, and an unusual number and variety of the witty, pungent, and sparkling sketches, for which Fanny Fern is so celebrated. Many of its brilliant sallies of wit and effusions of pathos remind us of the famous hundred-dollar-a-column story which the author wrote for the Ledger a few years since. And, by the way, we will here gratify hosts of correspondents who have written us in regard to this subject, by stating that "Fanny Ford," the story referred to, was contracted and paid for by us at the above-mentioned rate of one hundred dollars a column, brevier type, such as the continued stories of the Ledger were then published in; our paper being then issued in the four-page form, which made the columns a little longer than they now are. Many writers of both sexes, who aspire to be rivals of Fanny Fern, have never forgiven her for obtaining, nor us for paying, such an unprecedented price for literary matter, and have sought consolation in constant declarations that they "don't believe we ever paid any such sum." One "man about town," whose productions we have repeatedly refused, we are told has even gone so far, in his zeal in this matter, as to say that he *knows* we didn't pay the alleged price—that we told him so; which false assertions we would probably have deemed unworthy of notice, coming, as they do, from an individual who is disappointed and chagrined at our rejection of his writings, were it not that in making them he assails the veracity of a third party. And we will now take occasion to publish, what we have repeatedly said in private, that could we have foreseen the immense benefit which accrued to us from the operation, we would gladly have paid *two hundred dollars a column* for the story, could it not have been obtained for less.

* * *

GOLDEN SHOWERS.

We recently heard an avaricious fellow wishing it would rain gold, instead of the balmy, liquid blessing of the clouds. God forbid the exchange. The heavens, since the earth was, have showered down a better than coined gold. From the vast ewer of his never-failing bounty, the Father of mercies has rained the life of butter and cheese, and fruit, and grain, and flowers, that are, even now, all over the land coined into the plenty that gives nourishment, and life, and joy, to millions. Such is the gold that best fills the purse of a country—gold glittering on butter-cups and daisies, down in the valley meadows, and shimmering on all the hill-side pastures. Out upon these covetous mortals, who would have the heavens trickle mint-drops instead of rains and dews. Let them delve in the dirt and darkness of mines, slaves to the ignoble desire that refuses to accept the natural bounties of God, as better than any human coinage or device.

* * *

MAN AS HE SHOULD BE.

Why should not every working man be a gentleman in his behavior, and every working woman a lady? Gentlemanliness, or ladylikeness does not consist in birth, in wealth, or robes, or jewels, or fashionable and costly clothing. There are those who possess all these, and yet are very unmannerly. A gentleman literally, originally, and properly, signifies a gentleman, or one who is urbane and kind in his conduct towards all persons, whatever may be their rank, but especially towards those who may, in any respect, be deemed his inferiors. A proud and haughty monarch, lord, or squire, is not a gentleman. A contemptuous, fastidious, disdainful, arrogant, insolent princess or duchess is not a lady, and does not deserve the name of a woman. The working classes have generally very distinct ideas of the attributes of ladies and gentlemen. "He is no gentleman," said an ostler the other day, concerning a wealthy man, who had been assuming all sorts of airs about his horse, which had stopped for some hours at the stable, and for which he paid a dime. Manners and morals, not money or titles, or costly garments, make men gentlemen, and women ladies. This distinction is not a property qualification, or an hereditary right, but a mental and moral accomplishment which all may possess.

* * *

The last accounts from India give the details of some of the most frightful massacres of Europeans by the natives that history records. In many cases parents were firmly bound, and then, before their eyes, the fingers and toes of their children were cut off, one after the other—the wretched parents being thus compelled to witness the tortures and hear the agonized shrieks of their darling little ones writhing in the gripe of their demoniac foes.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

Party spirit is often a species of mental vitriol which we bottle up in our bosoms to be squirted against others, but which, in the mean time, irritates, corrodes, blackens and poisons our own hearts. Personality and invective are proofs not only of a bad argument but of a bad arguer. Politeness, whilst perfectly compatible with logic and wit, enhances the triumphs of both. By a union of courtesy and talent, an adversary may be made to grace his own defeat, as the sandal tree perfumes the ax that cuts it down. Cæsar's soldiers fought none the worse for being scented with unguents, nor will any combatant be weakened by moral suavity. A furious pamphleteer on being reproached for his acrimony, exclaimed:—"Burke, and Curran, and Grattan have written thus as well as I." "Ay," said his friend, "but have you written thus *as well* as they?"

A man cannot fully appreciate the higher properties of his nature, until, by becoming a parent, he feels himself to be a creator as well as a creature. The childless man passes through life like an arrow through the air, leaving nothing behind to mark his flight. But the father feels that he belongs to the future; for his descendants, by great discoveries and great reforms, may possibly influence the destiny of the whole human race "till the great globe dissolve." These may be fond and doating reveries, but, like all the aspirations connected with our offspring, they soothe and ameliorate the heart, while they send the delighted spirit into the future, wreathed with laurels, and mounted upon a triumphal car of glorious hopes.

Originality in authorship is generally unconscious or undetected imitation. Even Seneca complained that the ancients had compelled him to borrow from them what they would have taken from him if he had been lucky enough to precede them. It is in the power of any writer to be original by deserting nature and seeking the quaint and fantastical; but literary monsters, like all others, are generally short-lived.

If we have many opinions that were once proscribed, it is presumable that we cling to many more which will be proscribed by future generations. However quickly we adopt an error, we are apt to abandon it slowly. A man often feels a pain in the leg that has been amputated, and so he frequently yearns towards an opinion after it has been cut off from his mind.

We cannot positively pronounce anything to be final evil till the whole scheme of creation is revealed to us. Every architect complains of the injustice of criticising a building before it is half finished, Whilst we are all in a vessel that is sailing under sealed orders, we shall do well to confide implicitly in our government and Captain.

A highly poetical writer at Chicago says that perhaps the magnificent necklace of lakes, one of which sparkles off that city, is only the souvenir of the great Mediterranean that once rolled over the prairies—shattered fragments of the great mirror wherein wide heaven was pictured, from Ursa Major to the Southern Cross.

The more illiberal and envious of the London newspapers taunt us by saying that we Americans follow the British in all things. It is undeniable that our soldiers generally followed theirs in the last war between the two countries.

Mr. Nathaniel Burton was beaten for a local office in Alabama, on the 16th ult., by Asher Campbell The people there are no doubt a very good people notwithstanding their straining at a Nat and swallowing A. Cam'ell.

Two ladies are advertised to go up in a balloon in Missouri this week. If they take care to be fashionably dressed, they will be in no manner of danger. Their crinolines will be excellent parachutes.

Many of our Theaters advertise "promenade tickets at low prices" At Washingson City, such tickets are sometimes distributed gratis. There they are better known as *walking tickets.*

A frightened horse dashed through the streets of one of our western cities last week and knocked down the Mayor, a venerable gentleman of seventy In this case, unfortunately, the gray Mayor didn't "prove the better horse."

A worthy young editor, who has just gone into business in the West, boasts that his paper "at present *augers well.*" We hope and believe he doesn't mean that it is a great *bore.*

Half of our illness and misery arises from the perversion of that reason which was given to us as a protection against both. We are led astray by our guide, and poisoned by our doctor.

A California paper, which, a few months ago, was calling for "women" to emigrate to that State, is now, we perceive, calling for "*ladies.*" We are afraid that our friends out there are getting aristocratic.

We do not think a State should confiscate the property of the man she hangs. It is too much like the conduct of the highwayman who never kills a traveler without rifling his pockets.

He was a pretty sensible old bachelor, who, on seeing the words "families supplied" over the door of an oyster-saloon, stepped in and said he would take a wife and two children.

An Illinois paper says there is a man in its neighborhood so dirty that the assessors put him down as real estate.

A writer, dwelling upon the importance of small things, says that he always takes "note of a straw" Especially, perhaps, if there's a julep at one end of it.

Men are too often apt to put a great deal at hazard to gain a little. It is as if a fisherman should bait his hook with trout to catch worms.

A miser is justly called but a humane version of the turnspit dog that turns every day to roast meat for others' eating.

CURRENT ITEMS.

Madame Boerst, a German lady, living in Nineteenth street, was surrounded by a number of men near her residence, a few evenings since, as she was returning from a neighbor's, and robbed of her watch and breast-pin. The robbery was effected so suddenly, that, before Madame Boerst could give any alarm, the robbers had disappeared.

A servant girl living in the family of Dr. Hardenbrock, of Williamsburg, having been left to take charge of the babe while her mistress should run out to a neighbor's, neglected the little thing, and it crept to the head of the stairs leading to the cellar, down which it fell and dislocated its spine.

A young man named Voss, who resided in Washington, D. C., was recently killed by the accidental discharge of a pistol he carried concealed upon his person. When will men learn that it is better *never* to carry deadly weapons in civilized communities.

A Rochester paper says that women in that city who wear the Bloomer costume are "warned out to do military duty." We think that after one of them has carried a knapsack and a fourteen pound musket all day, through the mud, she will be willing to give up that "right."

A man walking on the track of the New York Central Railroad, a few nights since, near Manlius, was struck by the cow-catcher and hurled from the track. The train was stopped and search made for the unfortunate's body, but it could not be found.

A Boy, named Daniel Wyman, was recently committed to the House of Refuge, in the western part of this State, who is fifteen years old, six feet and two inches high, and guilty of one burglary and many larcenies. That boy has certainly got a prodigious start in life.

A Michigan girl, named Miss Mary Milkesell, recently walked one hundred and sixty miles in four days. Forty miles a day is good pedestrianism for biped or quadruped.

It is stated by a person who has given the subject much attention, that there are, at least, five millions of rats in New York, and that they annually destroy property of the value of a million of dollars.

Two forged checks were presented a few days since at a bank in New Orleans, by a couple of girls aged twelve and sixteen years Both checks were drawn by the eldest of the girls

It is said that there are over one thousand Mormons in the city of New York, who worship after the manner of their sect, and implicitly obey the mandates of Brigham Young

During the prevalence of a recent rainstorm a large snake was seen wriggling his way along the gutter of South street, in this city, much to the surprise of the people of that locality He was summarily knocked on the head.

In Anne Arundel county, Maryland, a beautiful girl, named Christina Perkins, was recently found dead in a small grove near her residence, with marks of violence upon her breast and throat.

The population of the State of New York is now greater by nearly half a million, than that of the whole Union, at the time of the Revolution.

WHEN I WAS YOUNG.

BY ALICE CARY.

O, the cool and silent shadows,
That trembled as they hung
On the hedge beside the grassy lane,
Where I walked when I was young!

O, the green and graceful elm-trees,
Where I used to sit and sigh
Till the evening candle-light went out
In the house of my love, close by!

And oh, the sweet, sweet trouble,
That made my heart beat fast,
If she failed to meet me till th' time
Was but a moment past.

Ah, if the spring should come without
The bright red flower of May,
Or the month without the maiden moon,
The world would look that way.

◆

BION, THE WANDERER;

OR,

THE FAITHLESS GUARDIAN.

A STORY OF HOME, THE OCEAN, AND OTHER CLIMES.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.,
AUTHOR OF "ORION, THE GOLD-BEATER;" "THE GUNMAKER OF MOSCOW;" "KARMEL, THE SCOUT," ETC., ETC.

Entered according to Act of Congress, inthe year 1857, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE RESCUE.

The moon arose at nine o'clock, clear and bright. At ten, the pinnace was hauled up to the starboard gangway, and ten selected men got in, the captain and Jack following. The ship lay with her larboard side toward the town, so that by pulling away under cover of the starboard beam, the boat would not be seen by any one on shore. The men were well armed, and ready for any ordinary emergency. As soon as Bion had taken his seat the boat was pushed off; and until they had gained the entrance to the harbor they kept under cover of their vessel. From here it was but a moment's pull to the headland, and when this was once reached there was no more need of caution.

The creek was found as had been described, and ere long afterwards they came to the basin, it being a place where the creek widened to a sort of pond. Bion landed as he had been directed, and after working his way through a mass of mulberries, he came to an open field, upon the left of which was the conical hill as had been promised. The moon shone brightly—almost too brightly, for the movements of the adventurers could have been detected at a considerable distance, had there been any sentinels upon the lookout.

Our party saw nothing, however, to excite any apprehensions, and they moved on at once toward the hill, upon the northern side of which, and at the foot, they found a large stone, which seemed to cover some sort of an aperture. Bion went up, and spoke:

"Hallo! Any one in here?"

"Yes!" answered a voice from within, in quick, eager accents.

"Who are you?"

"Men and Americans. Can you set us free?"

"We have come to do that thing. Wait a moment."

A heavy bar of wood was found close at hand, and with this the men got a purchase upon the heavy stone. It required considerable power to throw the rock over, but it was done at length; and in a moment more two men rushed out. The moon shone full in their faces as they turned, and revealed tneir features plainly.

The first one of the two was a tall, gaunt man, with long gray hair, and a grizzly beard all unshorn. His eyes were sunken, and his face of a dark hue. His only clothing was a piece of cotton cloth, wound about the body from over the left shoulder.

The second man was smaller than his companion, and not quite so old, the first being all of sixty. His hair was tinged with gray, but not much. His beard was long and flowing, and much more silvered than his hair. His features were regular, and must have been handsome when flushed with health. But they were dark and sunken now, and the frame seemed weak and emaciated.

"Oh!—are we to be free?" gasped the first of the two, springing forward, and seizing Bion by the hand.

"Yes, sir—you are!" was the young captain's reply, "While we have life you shall have liberty!"

"Blessings on your head!" the freed man cried, with overpowering gratitude. "Free! free!" he continued, clasping his hands, and raising them heavenward: "Oh, God! am I free at last!" He bowed his head as he ceased speaking, and covering his face with his hands, he burst into tears.

In the meantime, his companion had been upon his knees, pouring forth his thanks in deep, heartfelt tones.

But that was not the place for consultation, so Bion turned towards his boat, and bade his companions to follow. The boat was reached without difficulty, and before one o'clock they were safe on board the ship.

As the old captain's feet touched the deck, and he cast his eyes over the moonlit scene, his heart swelled again, and notes of thanksgiving fell from his lips.

"Oh! I cannot realize it!" he uttered, with his hands clasped: "On shipboard once more! Beneath the Yankee flag! Oh! God be praised! It is not a dream!"

"It can't be a dream, unless I have changed to a spirit, and this be a phantom ship," returned Bion, smiling.

Upon the quarter-deck the old man stopped and gazed around again. He looked over the deck first, and then cast his eyes aloft. Everything was up and in its place, and no ship ever looked better in point of order and neatness.

"Have I seen the captain?" he asked.

"I am the man, sir," said our hero.

"You?—captain? Pardon me, sir. I thought you were very young."

"So I am, sir—young in years, at all events; not yet one-and-twenty, sir—not quite, though I soon shall be."

"Were you out in all the storm, sir?"

"Yes."

"And had no accident?"

"One main-topsail blown to pieces, sir."

At this point Jack Wallace moved nearer to the old man, and said:

"A poorer captain, sir, might never have brought this ship into port at all. Captain Bernard is young, but there are precious few——"

"There—that will do, Jack," interrupted Bion; and then, turning to Fourber, he added: "He has brought me up, sir, from a small boy, and he feels rather proud of his work. So when he praises me, he means a good word for himself as well."

"That isn't fair," urged Jack. "If you tell that, I'll tell more. I tell ye, sir,"—to Fourber—"he's done more for me than I ever did for him. But I guess that'll do."

"For the present," added Bion. "And now to business. I think the sooner we leave this place the better; don't you, sir?"

"Aye, sir, I do, most assuredly," answered Fourber, to whom this last remark was addressed.

During all this while the other man had not spoken a word. He had been gazing upon Bion steadily and anxiously, ever and anon turning his eye upon Jack.

"Will you go below, sir?" asked our hero. "We will get under weigh at once."

"Oh—let me see it, I pray you. Don't send me of until you get to sea."

"I won't do that, sir," said Bion, smilingly. And then turning to Jack he gave the order for calling all hands to up anchor.

The call was quickly passed, and ere long the windlass began to revolve. There was only one anchor down, and the men were not many minutes in bringing the bows over it. They worked not quite so easily as usual, because they were obliged to do it without noise. They missed the old song:

"Heave away!—Heave, boys!
One—two—three!
Heave away!—Heave, boys!
We'll soon be out at sea!
Heave away!—Heave, boys!
Heave, heave, heave!
Heave away!—Heave, boys!
Altogether—Heave!"

And so on, *ad infinitum* and *ad libitum.*

But they knew 'twould not do to raise the sleepers on shore, so they hove away in silence. As soon as the anchor was apeak, the topsails were cast loose, the courses unfurled, and the jib hoisted.

A. BOBBETT SC.

BION RESCUING THE PRISONERS FROM THE CAVE.

A few more turns of the windlass took the anchor from the mud, and as it came to the bows, one after another of the sails was spread to the breeze, and the ship stood out to sea with the wind upon the larboard bow, and the yards braced sharp up. But after she had cleared the headland, her helm was put up, and her course laid north-west, the wind being now very near abeam.

As soon as the captain had seen the ship upon the true course, and the watch set, he went below and gave his two new passengers a state-room, and promised to find them some clothing in the morning. Then he sought his own room, and was soon asleep. At length he had a dream. He dreamed that he was lost in a wood. He had wandered about a long time, and was about ready to give up, when he heard somebody singing; and pretty soon a little old man, with a humped back, and a tall red cap on his head, came hopping along as merrily as could be. He stopped before the lost wanderer, and asked him what he wanted. Bion told him he had lost his way. The little man told him to get on to the hump upon his back. So Bion mounted the curious hump, which looked just like the one which Punch wears in the picture-books, and in a moment more the little old man arose into the air and sailed away! And when he alighted it was upon the deck of the Good News. Bion got from his comical seat, and when he turned to thank his conductor, he saw, instead of the little man with the red cap, the youngest man of the two whom he had released from the cave. "I'll see you again, and save you again," said the man; and then he flew away into the air with a loud cry!

Bion awoke, and found it broad daylight.

His first movement after dressing was to look up some clothing for the two passengers. His own garments he knew would fit the second one, and he thought Jack's might do for the other—a trifle loose, perhaps, but yet right otherwise.

When the men were awake, the clothes were taken in to them, and they were found to answer very well. They were very grateful, and hoped they might at some time be able to repay their kind helper.

"I take my pay for such things as I go along," returned our hero, with a smile.

"How is it: can I take a farewell look at the land of my servitude?" asked Fourber, after he had dressed himself.

"No, sir," answered Bion. "We've taken you a little too far off for that."

"Well—I am not sorry."

The two men went up and took a look over the sea, and as they stood together by the weather quarter-rail their hands were clasped, and tears of gratitude were again in their eyes.

Bion could now examine them more fully than he had before been enabled to do. Captain Fourber—for such he supposed the oldest one's name to be—had been a very powerful man, but he was weak now, though not really sick. The frame was worn and abused rather than diseased, an uneasy soul having kept up a mental pain which had done its part towards breaking down a strong constitution. He had a fine head—large and full—and good features. The top of his head was somewhat bald, and the hair that clustered about the neck and ears very near white

The second man was smaller; and though much worn and debilitated, yet he did not show it so plainly as did his companion. His organization was finer, and his resistance not so strong and stubborn. He resigned himself more readily to inevitable circumstances, and had more Hope and Faith to help bear him up. His frame was rather below the medium size, but very muscular and compactly built. His hair was of a dark brown color, and, though tinged with gray, yet it retained much of its lively glossy appearance. His features were regular and handsome, and overshadowed by a spirit of deep melancholy, which was apparent to the most casual observer. Both of them had grown very dark beneath the climate to which they had been so long exposed, though the former was by far the darkest. Fourber appeared to be something over sixty years of age; his companion, not far from fifty.

After breakfast, as the young captain, Jack Wallace and the two passengers sat in the cabin, Bion turned to Fourber and asked him if he would not relate the circumstances attending his capture and subsequent servitude. The old man replied that he had intended to do so, and had only been waiting for a favorable opportunity. He took a sip from a glass of spirit which had been prepared for him, and then commenced:—

"It is now a little over seventeen years since I left the United States. I left in the latter part of April, bound direct for China. My ship—I was commander—was called *The Golden Crescent.* She was owned in New Orleans, and it was from that port I cleared. The ship was a fine one, and I felt proud of her. My crew consisted of thirty-eight men, and I had four passengers beside. This man was one of them."

"D' you say your ship was called *The Golden Crescent?*" asked Jack, at this point.

"Yes, sir," returned Fourber.

"The name sounds familiar. I must have known her."

"Aye—and it has a strangely familiar sound to me, too," added Bion. "I must have been very young—not much over four—when you sailed. It must have been another ship."

"Very likely," said Fourber. "However—we started on our voyage with good prospects, and so continued until we poked our nose into this sea. We made the Paracels on the morning of the second of November, and stood on, very near to them, to the east'rd. We were within some two or three miles of the Bin-wing island, I having stood in for the purpose of taking some telescopic views of the coast, when a dozen boats, or long canoes, came out from behind a low reef, and pulled for the ship. I saw that they were full of armed men. I counted them as nearly as I could, and found over a hundred of them, each canoe having from eight to ten men in it.

"I at once had our arms got up and prepared; but we had little time for preparation. We were under the lee of the islands, and had but very little wind; not over a knot-and-a-half—so the canoes came on swiftly; and I was not long in assuring myself that they were pirates. I called all hands aft, and told them what was coming; and they agreed to stand by me to the last moment. We had pistols and cutlasses, and two carriage-guns which carried six-pound shot. These latter we had loaded, and with them we sank one of the canoes, and knocked the bows from another. But we had killed only a few, and those who lived quickly clambered into the other boats; and before we could load again they were alongside.

"My men fought bravely; but what could we do against such numbers? The pirates were Malays, and all of them stout, reckless fellows. They came pouring over the side like so many wild beasts, and when I found that over fifty of them had boarded I ordered my men to fall back to the poop. The deck was now literally swarming with them, and the villains seemed anxious to kill us at once; but their leader managed to subdue them, and then made them a short harangue, seeming to be endeavoring to impress upon their minds something very important, which I afterwards learned was, the disposition they could make of us if they kept us.

"As soon as the pirates had become quiet the captain turned to me.—He could speak English quite well.—He asked me if I would surrender. I asked him what he meant to do. He said if we resisted he meant to kill us all; but if we did not, then he would spare us, and set us on shore.

"I had no alternative. I told him I should fight no more unless it was to save life. After this we were bound, and they then began to ransack the ship. They got all the money, amounting to some eighty thousand dollars; and, in fact, everything they wanted of the cargo. Then they stripped the ship and cut down the masts; and afterwards took us on shore. Eleven of our men had been killed in the short engagement while the pirates were boarding.

"That very night the wind grew to a gale, and a heavy storm set in which lasted two days. What became of the ship I never knew. The gale was from the south-west, and she must have been blown off towards the very islands where you found me."

"Hold on," interrupted Jack. "I remember all about it now. Let's see: I was in New York in May, sixteen years ago; and the news came in then that the *Golden Crescent* had been cast away in the Chinese Sea, and all hands lost. I remember it now. One of my shipmates brought us the newspaper aboard and read us the news. The hulk was found somewhere at sea with her masts cut away; half-filled with water; and four dead bodies in the cabin. I remember now. They said there had been a severe storm a week or two before they found the wreck."

"Aye," resumed the narrator, "I supposed such an event might happen. Well—we were kept upon that island a week, and then we were taken in a heavy junk and carried to the place where you found us, where we were sold into slavery. Part of us were sent into the interior, and a part kept at the sea-board. Sickness set in as the poor men were put to work in the hot sun, and one after another dropped away. Eleven months ago my companion and myself were left alone. All had died save us. We were then set at work in the carpenter's shop, where we have worked ever since until your ship made its appearance in our harbor.

"We have seen suffering enough, God knows! But if I can once more regain my health I shall still have ample scope for thankfulness and joy."

During this recital Bion had been an attentive listener, and yet much of the time he had been watching the younger of his two passengers. There was something in the appearance of the man—in his countenance—that more than interested him. And then he often found the eyes of the passenger fixed upon himself with a look of eager, anxious meaning."

"You were a passenger, sir?" the young captain at length said, turning towards the man.

"Yes, sir," he replied, in a tremulous tone. And as he thus spoke he cast a look upon his questioner which caused the latter to start half up from his chair It was a look which brought back to the youth's mind a dim, uncertain memory, like a face which hurries by in a crowd, and is gone ere it can be identified.

CHAPTER XLIV.

BEGINNING OF THE END.

It was some moments ere another word was spoken in the cabin. Bion gazed into the face which had so interested him, and the stranger returned the gaze with equal anxiety.

"Pardon me, sir," spoke our hero, at length, "but I have not yet heard your name."

"My name is GIDEON HUNTLEY, sir," the man replied, his voice still trembling perceptibly.

"*Huntley!*" repeated Bion, with a sudden start. *Huntley!*" echoed Jack, in blank astonishment.

"Yes, sir. My name is Gideon Huntley."

"Have you a brother Christopher?" asked Jack, eagerly.

"I had a brother by that name when I left the States, sir."

Jack turned to Bion and caught him by the hand; and was upon the point of speaking when he noticed that his young captain was pale as death.

"Eh? Why—what's the matter? What is it? Are you fainting?" the mate cried, as he started up and bent over the youth's chair.

"No, no. 'Tis nothing. 'Twill pass away in a moment," the captain returned, putting his old friend aside with his hand "Sit down, Jack. Sit down, and keep quiet a little while."

After this Bion bowed his head and covered his face with his hands. He remained so some seconds, and then turned his gaze once more upon the man who had caused all this strange emotion.

"Will you not tell me your story, sir?" he whispered.

Huntley arose from his seat, but he did not move from it. He stood a moment, as if irresolute, and then sank back again. He gazed awhile into Bion's face, and finally he said,—

"I will tell you a very simple story, sir. My home was in New Orleans. I had one brother, and upon all the earth he was my only known relative until I was nine-and-twenty. At that time, while in my thirtieth year, I went to Havana, where I found me a wife. She was one of the fairest and purest creatures that ever lived. She, too, was without any near relatives whom she knew. She went with me to New Orleans, where we found a sweet home, and where fortune smiled upon us. A child was born to us—a boy—and he became the centre of our hopes and aspirations; the object of our love and pride; and the pet of all our household.

"At length it became necessary that I should go to the East Indies. I went more to accommodate a man who had been more than a father to me, than for any business of my own. I had put it off from month to month, and even from year to year; but at length I had to go. I settled up my business in New Orleans, and placed my property all in my wife's hands in trust for our boy. She was not strong then, and she said she would go North when the summer time came, if her physician advised it. I left her—I left my child—I sailed from home in April—and—you have heard the rest.

"For over sixteen long, weary years I have been a captive in the land of a half-savage people, and during that time I have suffered such anguish as no mortal tongue can tell. I had a picture of my wife, but it was in a golden locket, and the savages took it from me. I asked them to give me back the ivory picture, but they would not even do that. Oh! that was the hardest blow of all!"

The poor man stopped here, and covered his face with his hands. Bion gazed upon him with an expression of deep, startling emotion, and his whole frame quivered.

By and by Huntley looked up again, and having gazed first upon Bion, and then upon Jack, he whispered,—

"You have been often in New York; perhaps you have heard of my wife—Belinda Huntley. I think she must have gone on there."

At this moment Bion started up from his seat. He opened his vest, removed his neck-kerchief, and, having loosed the bosom of his shirt, he took from his neck the golden locket he had so long worn there, and handed it to the sorrowing man.

"Open that, sir," he said, "and see if you recognize the original."

Huntley took it with a trembling hand, and pressed back the spring. The locket flew open, and his eyes rested upon a female face as beautiful as the stars of even. He gazed a moment—a low cry broke from his lips—"BELINDA!" he uttered—and then, while his frame shook, and the big tears burst from his eyes, he pressed the golden talisman to his bosom and bowed his head.

Bion had remained by the man's side, and when he at length raised his head, the young captain hoarsely whispered,—

"What was she to you?"

"What was she? Oh! Belinda! Belinda! My wife! my wife! My own, fond, worshiped wife!"

"Hooray!" shouted old Jack, leaping to his feet, unable longer to restrain himself. "Didn't I know it from the first! Didn't I know, when he told about New Orleans, and told what his name was, how it all stood! Hooray! hooray! He's yer father, me boy! He's yer father!"

"*Your father!*" whispered Gideon Huntley, rising to his feet and gazing Bion in the face. "Oh! in the name of Heaven I conjure you—do not deceive me now! Where did you get this locket, sir?"

"My dying mother placed it about my neck, sir, and bade me wear it always."

"*Dying! Dead!*" groaned the stricken man. And as the words passed from his lips he placed his arms about Bion's neck, and rested his head upon his shoulder.

"The moment I saw you my heart yearned towards you, and an invisible power led me to you in hope and love," the father murmured, as he held the youth off and gazed into his face.

"And so did I feel towards you," returned our hero. "But that my father could be here did not enter my mind."

But that was not the moment for explanations. As yet neither the father nor the son could fully realize the astounding truth that had burst upon them. The former gazed first upon the pictured face of his angel wife, and then upon the noble form of his boy. Ah! there could be no mistake in those features. The son was too like his mother to be doubted. And Bion, as he now gazed into the bronzed face before him, could plainly trace the features of the other picture in the locket.

* * * * * * * *

There were words spoken in that cabin which the reader can well imagine. It was a long while ere the father and son could converse calmly. A few words were sure to be followed by a burst of tears, and again and again were they clasped in each other's arms. The truth was finally realized—the veil was lifted—and those two hearts became united as firmly as though they had never been separated. As Bion now gazed upon his parent, he could only wonder that he had not recognized him at first; and the father, as he dwelt upon the handsome features of his son, felt that he must have been indeed blind that he did not recognize the almost exact counterpart of the sweet face of his sainted wife.

"But how is it I find you bearing a strange name?" asked Huntley, after they had become calm and subdued.

"Ah—it is quite a story, my dear father," the youth returned, still gazing fondly into his new-found parent's face. "An evil spirit has been at work since you went away."

"An evil spirit?"

"Yes. But listen: I will tell you my story, and then you can judge for yourself."

"Aye," added Jack, with a glowing face, "and when you have finished I can tell something that will throw light upon the subject. But go-ahead, Captain."

Bion commenced and told his story. He told of his early memories—of the indistinct images of earliest childhood—of the black faces—of his mother—of her sickness—of her giving him the locket; and then of her death. Then he told how dim and shadowy was the passage from the coffin of his mother to the hovel of Margery Grutt. He remembered of being carried there and left, and he fancied 'twas Christopher Huntley who did it. From this period his narrative was distinct and connected. He was taught by Margery to believe that his father was poor, and had died—killed by lightning, he thought—and that she had always known his parents. Then he told of being sent to sea—of gaining Jack's love and friendship, and how Jack had brought him up and helped to make him what he was.

"No, no," interrupted Jack, at this point. "It's you have made me what I am. But for you I should have been in the forecastle at this blessed moment. You know that."

"My father," resumed Bion, in a deep, grateful tone, "when I first put my foot on shipboard, a little boy of twelve years, I had no friend in the world, save God. I put my hands in Jack Wallace's stout grasp, and asked him if he would not love and care for me. He swore that he would. From that hour to this we have not been separated from each other but once, over a few hours, and that was while he was confined in a Malagosh prison."

"And who saved me then?" cried Jack. "Who risked his own life for mine then, I'd like to ask ye?"

"It was I, Jack; but you know my own life depended as much upon your salvation as did yours. However—that is not the point. You may give me as much credit as you please, only let me have the same privilege.—— Yes, my father—this man has been my constant and true friend; and though others have helped me—though Captain Puffer has treated me like an own child—yet my first and oldest friend has done most of all. But for him I should not now be the commander of a noble ship."

"Aye—and one of the best commanders that ever walked a quarter-deck!" added Jack, enthusiastically.

"I can swear to that," interposed Fourber; "for I know that the man who brought this ship in perfect safety through the terrific storm that preceded your coming into our harbor must have been as good a commander as any ship can need."

Bion blushed, but yet he felt proud, for he knew that these encomiums were not only sincere, but that they came from men who were amply qualified to judge of the facts. But he was not the only one who felt proud. He saw the grateful tear in his father's eye, and he knew that he, too, felt proud and happy.

But the conversation soon turned back upon the subject which had been left. Mr. Huntley was astonished at his brother's villainy; for that Christopher had done the work he could not doubt. As soon as Bion had concluded he said, with deep feeling:—

"Oh! I could not have believed Christopher capable of doing that. And yet I knew he was not always strictly honest. In fact, honesty was not a rule of his life. But he did nothing to harm your mother. She did not know that wrong was being done or meditated?"

"No—she could not have known it, for I can remember that she told me my father would come back. I remember that. But tell me—did you name me Bion?"

"Yes, my son. That is your true Christian name—the one your mother selected for you, and to which I readily agreed. It was the name of a beloved brother of her's who died some three years before I knew her. Probably they did not dare to attempt a change in that name. It was so familiar—so much a part of yourself—that they feared the attempt to change it would serve to prevent the accomplishment of the other change. Oh! Chistopher! It must have been he!"

"I told ye I had something," said Jack, starting up from his seat and going to his state-room. When he returned he bore in his hand a sealed package.

"There," he uttered, as he sat down again, "I've got something here which Captain Puffer wrote. He would have given it to you before, Bion, only you were very young when he first learned it, and he feared, if he trusted you with it, that you would be led into a suit with your uncle, from which you would be sure to come out the worst. Your uncle had the money, the influence, the power; and he had the wickedness, too, to do anything. Why, he tried to get you into his power the first time you landed in New York, after coming home in this ship. He tried hard to make Puffer turn you out of the ship. He even swore that you were dishonest, and would not be safe on shipboard. But Puffer knew him a little too well."

"Is it possible?" cried the youth, as his bosom swelled, and his dark eye flashed.

"Yes," returned Jack. "But read this."

Bion took the paper and broke the seal. It was a plain, simple statement of the facts which Captain Puffer had gained concerning the youth's relations with Christopher Huntley. First, he stated what Margery had told him; and then related the circumstances which had transpired on the uncle's visit to the ship. After this he went on to tell what he had learned from Narrowgimp and Makepenny. This was proof conclusive. By this it appeared that Christopher Huntley had been appointed sole guardian of Belinda Huntley's child—that he had brought all the property on to New York—that he had removed the child from the care of those who had been with the mother—and finally, that he had given out to the world that the boy had sickened and died, and was then growing proud and aristocratic upon the wealth thus wrongfully obtained.

It was all as plain as the noonday sun now. Not a link was wanting to connect the guilt and the guilty.

"I am glad I did not know of this," said Bion, after he had pondered a while.

"Aye," responded Jack. "We looked at it in this light:—You were young—too young to commence a suit at law in your own name; you could not have *proved* anything; and ten chances to one if he wouldn't have proved you an impostor."

"I see," returned our hero. "I see it all. But we can overhaul him now. We can search out evidence."

"We can easily gain our rights," added the father; "and that is all we can ask. As for punishing Christopher, ah! I am sure he has suffered enough; or, he will when he sees his wronged brother and that brother's child together. Alas! I did not think he could be so wicked!"

The matter was talked over until they all understood it, and then Bion took his father on deck. The men were called aft, and Jack was directed to tell the simple story, which was thus:—

When Bion was only four years old his father went to sea. The wreck of his ship was found in the Chinese sea, and he was supposed to be dead. But now, after a lapse of seventeen years, his father is found in the person of the mild, generous looking man who stands by his side.

Jack told this, and when the enthusiastic cheering and warm congratulations had subsided, Jack continued by relating the capture by pirates, and the subsequent servitude.

It was a happy scene upon that deck; and when all was quiet again Fourber turned to his old companion in suffering and said:—

"I never saw quite such a picture of a model ship and model crew before. I have been in many ships, and sailed with many crews; but I never before saw such perfect love for their commander in the heart of every man as I see here. By the powers, Huntley, but you have found a noble son!"

"Noble?" repeated the parent; "oh! he is noble. As sure as I now live, this repays me for all I have suffered!"

And yet there was one sad thought amid the many that thronged the father's mind. His gentle, lovely wife was dead! But then he had long known that it must be so; he had felt morally certain that she could not have borne up under the blow of her bereavement. He had felt that he had a wife in Heaven; and yet the coming of the verbal intelligence had swept away the dim possibility upon which he had long tried to found a hope.

But Gideon Huntley did not mourn as one newly bereaved. He turned his thoughts Heavenward with a calm and holy resignation, and while he felt a sort of sad satisfaction in knowing where his beloved wife was, his heart was filled to overflowing with the pure joy which came from the presence of his worthy and honored son.

Canton was reached in safety; other ports were visited in proper season; and finally the ship's head once more was turned towards home.

Ah—little dreamed Christopher Huntley what a consignment the old ship was bringing for him!

CHAPTER XLV.

DEVELOPMENTS.

It was a bright, beautiful morning in mid-summer when the ship Good News came into New York harbor with a diminutive steam-tug puffing and laboring at her side. At ten o'clock she was at her pier, and as Louis Fourber and Gideon Huntley placed their feet upon the soil of their native land their glad hearts bounded with gratitude, and their thanksgiving was deep and fervent.

"Once more! once more at HOME!" whispered Fourber, reaching forth both his hands.

"Aye," returned Huntley, taking them in his own, "once more free and hopeful. God be praised!"

Capt. Fourber left the ship at noon to look up old friends; but he first promised that he would not speak of his companion's return.

At three o'clock Bion had made arrangements so that he could leave, though Jack had to remain. He and his father started up into the city, their first object being to visit the place where Christopher Huntley had buried his children. They called at the office where the records of the interments were kept, and there found where the merchant's burial place was. They then took a coach and ere long were landed at the entrance of the yard.

They had walked a short distance among the grassy graves, searching for the spot they sought, when they saw an old man with a spade in his hand, standing by a white slab.

"He knows, of course," said Bion; and toward him they bent their steps.

The sexton's head was bare, and the white locks streamed over his shoulders, looking like a floss of silver in the sunlight. His sleeves were rolled up; one bronzed hand clasped the well-worn spade, while with the other he wiped the sweat from his polished brow.

"Can you tell me where Christopher Huntley's place of burial is?" asked Bion.

"Christopher Huntley," repeated the old man, slowly, and with peculiar emphasis. "This is his place, gentlemen."

"This?"

"Aye—*this*. Here are five graves already full. I made two of them sixteen years ago, and into them I put a mother and her son. The boy was four year and ten months old. These three other graves have been made since, and they contain his children. There is a curious fatality here, sirs. They all died at the age of four years and ten months."

"*All!*" repeated Bion, half to himself.

"All," added the old man.

"But what is this? What is this new grave for?" the youth asked, looking into the narrow place which the sexton had just completed.

"This is for Christopher Huntley's wife, sir. Alas, poor soul! she has been fading away for many years. I knew her, sir, when she first became his wife. In all the city there was not a purer or fairer maiden. But she has faded away, and very soon will come to me; and I shall place her by the side of her children! The next must be Christopher Huntley himself."

"But there is one grave covered with flowers—how is that? Why should that bloom and blossom so sweetly, while the others only wear a covering of grass?"

"Ah," answered the old man, "there is another mystery. That is the second grave. It was where I laid a nephew of the merchant. Bion his name was. His father was lost at sea, and his mother, who lies in the first grave, died here in New York. She came from a Southern home, but she lived not long. Nor did the boy survive her a great while. A poor woman comes and plants these flowers, and when the earth is parched with drought she brings a little cup and waters them from the spring yonder."

"But who is the woman?"

"I don't know. She says the boy used to love her; and as she has no children of her own, she remembers this one. Mr. Huntley has bade me pull the flowers up and cast them away, and once I did it; but the poor woman wept and prayed so that I never have troubled them since."

"Do you know where the woman lives?"

"No, sir. I see her frequently, but she will not tell me who she is, nor where her home is. But you must excuse me. I have another grave to make."

"One word," spoke Gideon: "When did Christopher's wife die?"

"Yesterday, at noon, sir."

"And when will she be buried?"

"To-morrow morning."

After this the old man went away to a distant part of the yard, and the father and son examined the marble slab which stood at the head of the flowery grave. It bore the name—

"BION HUNTLEY."

"There is where I am supposed to lie," said our hero, thoughtfully. "Oh, I wish we could gain some direct proof."

"We have the best of proof," returned the father. "Your presence is enough."

"Aye—I know. But if we could unmask his villainy, as it came from his hands, we might be saved trouble."

"Never mind. We shall see him. And yet, I must say, that there is something curious about this grave. He must have had some one buried here."

Bion was upon the point of replying, when his father's eye rested upon the white stone of the first grave. It bore the name—

"BELINDA HUNTLEY."

And then it stated that she was the "Widow of the late Gideon Huntley, who was lost at sea," etc.

The widower moved forward, and knelt upon the grave, and his son knelt beside him. They folded their hands, and the living parent lifted his eyes and prayed simply and earnestly. It was not the prayer of a sorrowing soul, but rather the offering of a calm and trusting spirit in behalf of one still cherished and beloved, though a dweller in another and a better sphere.

Both the father and the child felt better after that prayer. A sweet, holy influence had come upon them, and as they grasped each other by the hand after rising from the grave, they felt thankful for the brief season of communion thus afforded. The widower had seen the sacred spot of earth about which his prayers had been clustering, and with a happier resignation than before, he exclaimed: "Not my will, but thine, oh God, be done!"

As they turned from the grave they were slightly startled upon seeing an old woman standing near them. She seemed frightened at first, and would have turned away, had not Bion spoken. She was past the middle age of life; somewhat bent in form; poorly clad; with a staff in her hand, and the silvered hair floating over her shoulders.

"Fear not, my good woman," the youth said, seized with the sudden hope that this might be the woman he would see.

As she turned her face towards him he thought he had seen her before. There was something familiar in the melancholy countenance, and so there was in the soft light of the dark blue eyes. He moved nearer to her, and said:

"Have I not seen you before, ma'am?"

"You, sir?" she returned, gazing into his face.

"Yes. Your countenance is familiar."

"If I knew your name I might tell you."

"My name when I saw you was Bion Bernard."

"Bion Bernard! Oh—thank God I have found you!" ejaculated the woman, quickly and fervently. "You came to my house with an old sailor, and saw poor Barney Driscol die."

"Oh—Mrs. Duncan."

"Yes, sir—that's my name."

"And why are you here?"

"I come to visit this grave, sir."

"Ha! you are the woman then. It is you who have planted these flowers?"

"Yes, sir."

"Why have you done it? Will you not tell me?"

The woman pondered a few moments, and then she said:—

Yes, sir,—I will tell you all. I hunted for you once—when Barney was dead—after you had been to my house—I searched for you, and meant to tell you then. But I could not find you. I came here, sir, because *this is the grave of my own, my only child!*"

For a few seconds Bion was too much overcome by this sudden intelligence to speak. But at length he composed himself, and then asked:—

"Do you know this?"

"As well as I know anything, sir. I saw it all with my own eyes. But you seem surprised, sir. Let me ask you one question:—Are you not the one whom the world thinks to be lying here?"

"I am."

"Then I will tell you all I can, sir; for I know that I have been made the instrument for helping to wrong you. It will be sixteen years, coming winter, that my boy died. When he was very sick, and the doctor knew he could not live, a lawyer, named Lattimore, came to me and wanted to buy the body of my boy to bury under another name. I turned him from my house then. When the boy was dead he came again; and this time I listened more patiently. He told me that if I would let him have the body he would give it good Christian burial, and give me something handsome besides. He said there was a poor boy living whose whole life would be embittered, and against whom deadly enemies would forever aim their shafts, unless they could bring him up under another name, and wholly unknown. In order to do this he said it would be necessary to make these enemies believe that the boy was dead; and they could not do this without having it appear that he had died, and was openly buried. I was very poor—I was suffering much from want, and I finally yielded. He promised me that I should attend the funeral, and be present at the burial.

"I gave out that my boy had recovered and gone into the country; and to make the deception more easy the same doctor that had been visiting my child had also been engaged to visit the boy who was to be thought dead. I went to the funeral, and saw my own boy in a rich coffin, and the name of 'BION HUNTLEY' was upon it. Christopher Huntley was there, and people thought he mourned deeply. Oh! I had hard work to restrain my loud distress, but I made out to do it. My tears I concealed beneath my veil; and no one mistrusted the wrong that was being done, save those who were doing it.

"From that time till Barney Driscol came to live with me I did not know that I had been deceived. When he became acquainted with you, sir, at Margery Grutt's, he soon suspected that all was not right; and after you had gone to sea he began to understand the matter. He knew that Christopher Huntley sent you off, and he wondered what the wealthy merchant could have to do with one who was legitimately an inmate of Margery's hovel. He told me about it, and I then told him all I knew. He meant to have told you the secret, but his life did not last long enough. However, you know all now."

"Yes—and I thank you most fervently, my good woman," responded Bion. "But you shall not go with nothing but thanks. You shall be rewarded——"

"No, no, sir. I ask no reward."

"But you will let me do what I wish. In the first place, a stone bearing your boy's own name shall be put up here."

"Oh! Say you so? Will you do it?" cried the woman, in a frenzy of joyful hope.

"Yes. It shall be done as soon as all other matters are settled. But you spoke of a physician who attended me. I have a faint recollection of a sickness. Can you tell me who that doctor was?"

"Yes, sir. It was Doctor Henry Sommerton. I see him sometimes."

"Do you know where he lives?"

"No, sir. But I could easily find out."

"Thank you. And now will you tell us where you live?"

"I live where you found me, sir,—in Cross street, near Orange."

"And now answer me one more question: Will you go before Christopher Huntley and swear to all this?"

"Yes, sir," returned Mrs. Duncan, emphatically. "They deceived me. Had they told me their true object—had they told me that my dead boy, who had done no evil in his life, was to help rob a poor orphan of his birth-right—they should never have had the body—never! Yes, sir—I will go at any time. You will find me at the place I have told you."

"How is it now?—have you any money?"

"Some, sir. I work when I am able."

"Take this. Do not reject it. I am able, and I know you are needy. We shall call upon you."

The poor woman took the purse, and when she had poured forth her gratitude with tearful eyes, she turned away.

Bion and his father had nothing more to remain for, so they returned to their carriage and rode back into the city.

"We will let Christopher rest awhile," said the father, as they rode back. "I would not come upon him while he is suffering the first griefs of his bereavement."

Bion felt the same. He knew how deeply his uncle had wronged him, but for all that he had some regard for the feelings of the mourner.

In view of this it was arranged that they should visit Cora at her lake-side home before they saw Christopher; and when Jack knew of this he was much pleased.

On the following morning Jack accompanied the father and son to the house of Mrs. Duncan, and they not only found her at home, but she had learned where Sommerton lived. They found him in a small office on Pearl street. He was alone, and the three visitors at once took seats.

Henry Sommerton was a good-looking man; tall and well framed; and wearing a look of more than ordinary intelligence.

"I have come upon a curious errand sir," said Bion.

"Well—many people come here, sir, upon errands which they call curious," returned the doctor, with a smile.

"You shall hear," resumed our hero. "Did you not, some sixteen years ago, attend a boy named Bion Huntley?"

Sommerton started at this, and an uneasy look rested upon his features. He gazed Bion sharply in the face, and finally answered,—

"Why do you ask that question?"

The youth was sure, from the doctor's countenance, that he might be trusted; so he said,—

"I am the person, sir. I tell it to you in strict confidence for the present. I am Bion Huntley, and I am in hopes to regain the rights of which I have been robbed. Did you not attend me during a sickness at the time I have mentioned?"

"Well," returned the doctor, "since you are honorable and above board, I will be the same. A miserable shark of a lawyer found me hard up—hard-and-fast ashore—for money. I had been wild and dissipated, and he came upon me at a time when gold might have hired me to do something worse. He told me what I was to do, and I agreed to do it. I prepared a simple emetic for you, which was given to you by Christopher Huntley. You became sick in consequence, and I was sent for. I went, and found you suffering a slight nausea from the drug, and, at your uncle's order, I contrived to keep you sick some days. At length I became deeply interested in the poor boy; and one day, while I sat by your bedside, you talked so kindly and affectionately to me, that I was wholly overcome. I went to Mr. Huntley and told him that the boy should not be kept sick longer.

"I don't tell you this in order to smooth over my own share in the work, but it was so. When I assured the scheming uncle that I would give his nephew no more weakening drugs, he concluded to hurry up his work. Two negro girls, who had lived in the family, and who had lived with the boy's mother, were got out of the way——"

"Do you remember their names?" asked Gideon.

"Yes, sir. *Lida* and *Lizzy*, I think the names were."

"Ah! that's it!" cried Bion. "I remember the names."

"They were my girls," added the father; "and my wife's favorites."

"Well, sir," resumed the doctor, "the girls were got out of the way, and then the boy was carried off, and the body of a boy who had died near the Five Points was brought in and buried under my little patient's name. I have seen nothing of the parties since, save to meet them in the street. But even then I never recognize them. There, sir, is that of service to you?"

"Yes, sir," answered our hero. "And it would be of far more service to me if you would state those facts before Christopher Huntley, if I should find it necessary."

"I don't want to be lugged into court, sir; for my own character would be somewhat at stake."

"I pledge you my word, sir, that you shall not be called upon in any such manner. I only wish you to give me the privilege, for me to embrace if I find it of service, of calling upon you to confront the villain in his own house."

"I grant it, sir," said Sommerton, cheerfully. "Christopher Huntley deceived me. I was made to believe that the boy was to be removed for his own good; and hence I consider that my promise to him, under the circumstances, was no more binding than any pledge obtained by falsehood and deception."

The father and son were gaining light, surely!

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

A WARNING TO PARENTS.

It is a fault, says Plutarch, which very much deserves to be condemned in parents, to think themselves entirely discharged from the care of watching over their children as soon as they are put into the hands of masters, and not to think any longer of being certified by their own eyes and ears of the progress they make in study and virtue. Besides this, it ill becomes a father in a matter of this importance, wherein he is so nearly concerned, blindly to rely upon the integrity of strangers; for it is certain that a father's care to inform himself from time to time, and take an account of his son's application and behavior, may at the same time make both the scholars and masters more exact and diligent in the discharge of their several duties.

How just soever this duty is, and easy to be discharged, it is seldom that parents discharge it. They hardly ever concern themselves about the behavior of their children when they are grown up and have left school; and most of them show such an indifference and neglect in this point as is scarcely to be imagined. Many excuse themselves under a pretence of business and employment; as if the education of their children were not the most important of all, or the character of a father were effaced by that of magistrate, minister, or merchant.

Crates, the philosopher, wished to be on the most exalted eminence in the city, that he might cry aloud to the inhabitants, "O, senseless generation! how foolish are ye to think only of heaping up riches, and absolutely to neglect the education of your children, for whom you pretend to amass them!"

Parents pay sometimes very dear for their negligence and avarice, when afterwards they have the grief to see their children abandoned to every kind of vice and debauchery, disgrace them in a thousand ways, and frequently squander away more money in one year, on the gratification of their passions, than parents would have spent in ten by giving them a good and virtuous education.

FATAL MISTAKES BY PARENTS.

When children are at home for the holidays, in many families, every delicacy is forced upon them with the tempting remark, "that they cannot have this or that dainty at school;" and they are indulged in irregular hours for the same motive; thus the seeds of idleness, sensuality and sloth, are at once cherished, by converting the periodical visit at home into a season of intemperance, late hours, and an exemption from study; so that children are habituated, at an age when lasting associations are formed in the mind, to connect the idea of study with that of hardship, of happiness with gluttony, and of pleasure with loitering, feasting and sleeping. Would it not be better to make them combine the delightful idea of home with the gratification of the social affections, the fondness of maternal love, the kindness, and warmth, and confidence, of the sweet domestic affections?

FOOLISH WISHES IN CHILDREN.

Parents should not excite foolish wishes in the minds of their children, which are to be gratified at certain periods of their existence, or tell them that they shall have such and such indulgences when they leave school. These juvenile anticipations diminish the real happiness of life; those who are in continual expectation never enjoy the present; the habit of expectation is dangerous to the mind—it suspends all industry, all voluntary exertion. Young men, who early acquire this habit, find existence insipid to them without the immediate stimuli of hope and fear; no matter what the object is, they must have something to sigh for; a yacht, a fast horse, or an opera-dancer.

A RELIGIOUS DUTY.

While we are instilling religious principles into the tender mind, it is undoubtedly our duty to take peculiar care that those principles be sound and just; that the religion we teach be the religion of the Bible, and not the invention of human error or superstition; that the principles we infuse into others be such as we ourselves have well scrutinized, and not the result of our credulity or bigotry; nor the mere hereditary unexamined prejudices of our undiscerning childhood.

WOMAN'S TACT AND SAGACITY.

Woman, with her keener powers of perception, rapidly grasps at a knowledge of a man's character; and, owing to that faculty, soon becomes a skillful and comprehensive judge of his worth. Looks, words, tones, the most trivial things, assist her in forming an estimate, and she is rarely wrong when unbiased by prejudice. In this operation of the mind she appears rather to feel than to think.

Upon such an important subject as the acute knowledge of man possessed by woman, the opinion of Rosseau—that strange mixture of good and evil, of sublimity and littleness, of penetration and simplicity—must always be held to be very valuable to the inquirer into the mysteries of human nature. "Woman," says he, "who is feeble, and who sees nothing without, appreciates and judges the powers she can bring into action, to compensate for her weakness; and these powers are the passions of men. Her mechanics are far more powerful than ours; all her levers tend to shake the human heart. All that her sex can do of itself, which is necessary or agreeable to it, it must have the art to make us desire. It is necessary for her, then, to study profoundly the mind of men—not abstractedly the mind of men in general, but the minds of the men who are around her—the minds of the men to whom she is subjected, either by law or opinion. It is necessary that she should learn to penetrate their sentiments by their conversation, actions, looks and gestures; it is necessary that by her actions, looks and gestures she know how to give them the sentiments which please her without seeming to think of it. They will philosophize better than she respecting the human heart, but she will read better than they the heart of men. Presence of mind, penetration, fine observation, are the sciences of women; ability to avail themselves of these is their talent."

That remarkable woman, Ninon de l'Enclos, thus alludes to this consummate tact in her sex:—"From our infancy," says she, "we study your inclinations, your characters, your passions, your tastes. We learn to guess what is passing in the center of your hearts by your looks, your gestures, and the tone of your voice. Your sentiments are exposed to us in a thousand ways; your slightest movements are a language that betrays to us your secrets."

The superiority of the instinctive faculties in woman is why love commences in her more promptly than in man—why, in the life of the latter, it is only said to be an episode, and in her the whole mortal term; and why, when young, she fondles her doll; at maturity attaches herself to her husband and children; in old age, when she can no longer hope to please men by her beauty, devotes herself to God, and heals one love by another, without ever being entirely cured of it. From this it will be seen that women are gifted with the natural power and necessity for studying man, and becoming acquainted with the details of his character.

THE SPHERE OF WOMAN'S INFLUENCE.

Home is the sphere of woman's influence—the temple in which she worships with the zeal of her nature, and the fervor inspired by the beautiful images that flit across her brain, when occupied in the cheerful performance of her allotted duties. It is a place where, like a divinity, she is hedged round by all that is calculated to make life flow on to a placid end, equable and happy. It is her hope, her joy; and, to rule it well, one of the highest objects of existence. To her is given the answer to the pathetic question—

"Tell me, on what holy ground
May domestic peace be found?"

And her sweet reply is—

"In a cottaged vale she dwells,
Listening to the Sabbath bells."

This noble destiny, in which love and honor, at her command, are blended like sunbeams in a cloudless sky, is one which cannot be prized too highly by either man or woman; for, as they stand and fall together, so should they learn that their dependence is mutual, and their responsibilities in measure and value alike. But the charge of home is more especially committed to the keeping of woman; and upon her mental and moral capacity as a wife depends the happiness of herself and all by whom she may be surrounded. In the household it is permitted to her to be a bright planet, around which lesser and larger satellites move, to the music of that divine harmony which controls the most latent fibres of the human heart. Adverse circumstances, it is true, may step in and strive to darken the scene; but there is always an angel light shining within, when the wife knows how to dispense her native goodness, and prove to all that, whether in prosperity or adversity, it is from her—

——"That bosom-spring of rapture flows,
Which only virtue, tranquil virtue knows."

MARRIAGE IN CHINA.

Early marriages are encouraged in China. Among the mandarins and wealthy classes, the matrimonial age varies from sixteen to twenty years in males, from twelve to fourteen in females. The poorer classes marry as soon as they acquire sufficient money to purchase a wife and defray the attendant expenses. Occasionally a poor man will go to the foundling hospital in his neighborhood (foundling hospitals are very common in China) and obtain a girl, that he may take her home and educate her, giving her in marriage to his son when the young folks have arrived at a proper age. The thrift and caution of the national character are fully developed in this arrangement. In the first place, the money is saved which must have been expended in the purchase of a wife; in the second, the girl is educated by her mother-in-law, (that is to be), thereby falling into all the old lady's economical habits; thirdly and lastly, if the girl is not good-tempered, industrious, and respectful in her demeanor to her intended husband and his parents, she is very quickly sent about her business, without the attendant fuss which ensues when a wife is sent back to her family for misconduct after her marriage. The parties about to contract a marriage never see each other, the whole affair being arranged by their relations, or go-betweens, which are old women, who describe the lady in the most glowing terms, or the reverse, according to the presents which are made to them.

MARRIAGE.

Deceive not thyself by over-expecting happiness in the married estate. Look not therein for contentment greater than God will give, or a creature in this world can receive, namely: to be free from all inconveniences. Marriage is not like the hill of Olympus, *wholly clear*, without clouds: yea, expect both winds and storms sometimes, which, when blown over, the air is the clearer and wholesomer for it. Make account of certain cares and troubles which will attend thee. Remember the nightingales, which sing only some months in the spring, but commonly are silent when they have hatched their eggs, as if their mirth were turned into care for their young ones. Yet all the molestations of marriage are abundantly recompensed with other comforts which God bestoweth on them who make a wise choice of a wife.

LIFE'S REALITIES.

(A Contrast.)

BY FINLEY JOHNSON.

Within the halls of brightness,
Of splendor, pomp, and show,
Where streaming lights are whitening
The darken'd streets below,
Are petted lap-dogs sleeping,
Couch'd at fair beauty's feet,
While homeless, houseless mortals
Are weeping in the street.
Oh! would that those who revel
In luxuries so rare,
Could feel but for a moment
The sting of *their despair*,

The rich have fires blazing,
Have couches made to bear
The yielding form of beauty,
And hearts that know no care;
But, oh! the needy creatures,
Who, stamp'd with sorrow's seal,
Are feeling all life's anguish
As but the poor can feel;
Their roofless sheds containing
But mortals stamp'd with woe,
Who, wearied with complaining,
Are dying as they go.

The rich have happy children,
Who, romping on their floors,
Think not that those less favored
Are at the alms-house doors;
Then ye, whom God has honor'd,
Ye have a charge to bear;
Sustain those helpless creatures
Crush'd down with grief and care.
Then, when your race is ended,
Your earthly duties done,
Be yours the crown of glory
Which you have nobly won.

JENNY HART'S DIARY.

BY EMILY GODFREY.

CHAPTER I.

Templeton, July 12th, 18—.

It is perhaps the hardest work I ever do—this sitting still. I have read till my eyes ache, written in this stupid journal till I hate the sight of pen and ink, and now I sit and look out of the window and yawn, and yawn and look out of the window, as my last resort. The mowers in the field beyond the house make me fidgetty with their long, regular sweeping of scythes, and falling of tall grass—and when they stop to use the "rifle"—ah, the sound makes me shiver from head to foot. This intolerably hot, still, oppressive day! What is to be done in it? How can one muster energy enough to move, much less to go out of doors in this broiling sun?

Evening.

It is cooler now, and I can sit here at my window and think comfortably. Ha—what is this I see? Two "solitary horsemen" (oh, James, where are you?) riding down our village street, and stopping at our one hotel. Here is an adventure for me. One has fair hair—he shall be my hero, and for the one with black locks—why, I will make a present of him to Kate Grant, who is my dearest friend. They would make a royal pair. I think I see her dark gray eyes flash scornfully at the bare idea. Poor Kate—matrimony, to her, has been anything but a pleasant dream. There go my horsemen—they have entered the hotel. Never mind, I will run over to Kate's, and talk so foolishly about the new arrivals, that she will have to give me one keen glance, and then laugh as heartily as I, at my nonsense.

July 14th.

Fate seems to favor me. My two horsemen turn out all I could desire. The one with black hair is an Englishman, traveling for pleasure through America—the other, a New York gentleman, who accompanies him through pure friendship. Like two modern Quixotes, they are roaming up and down in search of adventures. But what do they expect to find in this out-of-the-way place, that they are to stop here a month? I cannot imagine. But, one thing I know, and that is this: They shall receive an invitation to that pic-nic and fishing party which is to be held in "The Grove" to-morrow. My cousin Frank shall carry the invitation, and make himself so agreeable, (handsome fellow that he is!) that they cannot choose but accept it. I, Jenny Hart, have said it—and that is sufficient.

Afternoon.

Frank took the invitation, after many entreaties and a little pouting on my part, and has just returned. "Mr. Arthur Henderson" and "Mr. Edwards" will be most happy to attend the fishing party. But cousin Frank looks black at my delight, and says they are "two proud, stuck-up peacocks, especially Mr. Edwards." That is the black-haired stranger. By the way, I wonder what his first name is, and if it would not have been as polite for him to send it. "Mr. Arthur Henderson." I like the name of Arthur very much. To be sure, it is not quite so pretty as Frank, but then one must not expect too much in this world. Now let me decide upon my own dress, and then I will run over and see what Kate Grant is going to wear. Her blue muslin, I am determined, and her gypsy hat—she looks her best in them, and I have determined she shall captivate Mr. Edwards. Who knows? If Kate could really love again, might she not forget the husband who deserted her so cruelly four years ago?

July 15th.

Oh, Robert Burns, you were very right in saying—

> "The best laid plans of mice and men
> Gang aft aglee."

Such a series of cross purposes as came to plague me yesterday. In the first place, Kate had some inkling of my intentions concerning Mr. Edwards and herself, and with her usual obstinate horror of any match-making, determined to disappoint me. When the carriage stopped for her, she made her appearance in a horrible "log-cabin" sun-bonnet, that flapped down over her eyes, and hid her face entirely. I saw Mr. Edwards give her one glance, and then turn away; and I could have cried with vexation, if I had not seen by the quivering of her handsome lips that she was just on the point of shouting with laughter at my disappointment. There was little said on our way to the grove, though I hoped to mend matters a little when we got there. But when the carriage stopped Kate was in the middle of a group of acquaintances in an instant, laughing and talking with every one she met, but freezing into a provoking dignity, and drawing that hateful sun-bonnet farther over her face, the moment I approached with Mr. Edwards. At last I gave up all attempts in despair, and then she grew more like herself. When the fishing-tackle was produced, she seized upon my cousin Frank, and marched him off to the brook side, leaving me with Mr. Edwards upon my hands. Mr. Henderson was playing the amiable to my sister Lizzie, so I had no fears for him, but what in the world was I to do with that grave, haughty Englishman? We went down to the brook together. Kate and Frank were near by us—so near that she could not avoid speaking without being positively rude. Mr. Edwards baited my hook with profound gravity, but let his own float heedlessly in the water, while he watched Kate stealthily from under his broad-brimmed straw hat. She seemed aware of his scrutiny, grew nervous, murmured something about its being warm, and pulled up her hook with a great jerk. Then we all stood aghast, for it had flown back and fastened in her hand. She turned a little pale, but said nothing.

"Give me a knife," said Mr. Edwards, through his shut teeth. I handed him mine—a little sharp-pointed toy—and, without speaking a word to her, he took her hand in his. Both started. She looked up at him, but he kept his eyes fixed upon the wound, and in a moment had cut around the hook, and extracted it.

"Tie up the hand, and keep it from the air, and it will do well enough," he said to me, as I wiped away the flowing blood. He took up his fishing-rod, and went down the bank to a more convenient spot for fishing. I saw Kate's large eyes follow him, but I could not read them—I have never seen such a look in them before. I hoped they would come together then. But no. Mr. Edwards sat and fished in the same place all the afternoon, and Kate went up into the woods, and helped arrange the tables, so that there was no getting at her. And when we rode home, she sat close beside cousin Frank, and sang duetts with him all the way. Kate is a magnificent singer, and I do hope Mr. Edwards listened to her. But I cannot tell if he did or not, for he sat on the seat with the driver, and never turned his face our way, except when he got down to help some lady out. When it came Kate's turn, he came to assist her, but I saw she did not touch his hand as she sprang out, and only nodded the good night to him she spoke to all the others. Oh, dear, I am vexed and unhappy. Why should the two, of all others, that I had hoped were made for love and happiness, take such an inveterate dislike to each other?

July 16th.

I have been with Kate this morning. I went over there to give her a good scolding for her behavior of yesterday. She heard me through very quietly, and then said—

"My dear Jenny, let me tell you one thing. You may as well set your heart at rest about Mr. Edwards. His very presence gives me pain, and when he touched my hand yesterday——"

"I saw you start," I said, as she paused.

"Yes," and her proud face grew still prouder. "It was like stabbing me with a deeper wound, Jenny."

"But why?" I asked, curiously.

She looked at me a moment gravely and steadily.

"Jenny, in some inexplicable way he reminds me of my husband."

"But I thought you said his hair was light?" I answered, wonderingly.

"So it was—yet—never mind, Jenny."

At any other time I might have stopped, for this subject had scarcely ever been broached between us. I knew, long ago, that Edward Grant had made her very unhappy, and that he deserted her at last, leaving her with an infant daughter, but I have scarcely ever mentioned his name to her during all our long intercourse. But now some sudden impulse made me ask—

"Kate, do you suppose he is dead?"

She turned white.

"God forbid!" she gasped.

I looked at her with new eyes.

"Kate, for the first time in all our friendship, I have read your heart. Why in the world have you never told me before that you still loved your husband?"

"Hush! hush!" she said, quickly.

"I will not. We are old and true friends. Tell me, Kate."

"Well, then, if you must know," she answered, speaking rapidly, "it was because I was ashamed of a love that would live in spite of all my endeavors to kill it. And yet, after all, I don't know that I need be. Perhaps it is the better part of my nature that clings to him so. He is the father of my child, Jenny, and he was the lover of my girlhood. In spite of everything, I love him yet."

Just as she finished speaking, a knock came at the door. It was Mr. Edwards and Mr. Henderson, who were calling on their acquaintances of the day before. I received them, for Kate had vanished into her own room. When she appeared again, however, she was cold and composed as ever, and met her guests with well-bred ease and dignity.

I thought Mr. Edwards seemed absent-minded and *distrait*. He glanced now and then at Kate, who conversed with Mr. Henderson, but he said little, and now and then seemed entirely to forget that a being like myself had existence. I pardoned him in my heart, however, for I was assured he was falling as deeply in love with her as I could desire, and I felt sure that something would yet occur to lead her to bestow her hand and heart where they would be more carefully prized and guarded than at first.

Mr. Henderson asked Kate to sing, and Mr. Edwards and I followed them to the piano. I think he is passionately fond of music, for he listened with his heart in his face. I began to think him positively handsomer than the eloquent Mr. Henderson, when I saw the soul and feeling that glowed in his eyes. If he did not look quite so much like a Spaniard, I should think him much the finest looking of the two. But the old song goes, "A dark man for my ladye," and perhaps Kate may prefer him so, after all.

When Kate stopped at last, he selected a piece of music from the pile upon the piano, and laid it before her. It was "The Last Rose of Summer," and on the title-page were the words, "Edward to Katie." I knew well who had written them. Her lip quivered as she looked at the familiar writing, but she was too proud to betray herself before him.

"It is an old song—I have not sung it for years, and should only murder it," she said, carelessly. "But I will play you something else."

She struck up a brilliant waltz. He stood and looked at her earnestly, as if he was trying to solve the mystery of her conduct.

Just then the parlor door was thrown open, and her little daughter Ina came bounding in. She is a lovely child, with fair hair, large, blue eyes, and regular features. But she does not resemble Kate at all. I have heard it said that she is the image of her father, and this may be the reason why she is so beloved by her mother.

"Softly, softly, my child," said Kate, looking round at her with a smile. "Mamma has company, you see."

Thus admonished, the little one greeted us one after another with a grave courtesy beyond her years. The dark face of Mr. Edwards seemed to attract her attention. She stood beside him while we were talking, and at last laid her little hand timidly upon his knee, as if to attract attention. His face changed then. I knew he loved children, by the tender smile that played around his mouth. He lifted the little girl in his lap, and began talking to her in a low voice. Kate is always watchful of all intrusions on Ina's part, and looked uneasy at first. But when she saw how easily he talked with her, how completely he unbent to the little fairy, and how pleased she was with her stately acquaintance, her own face softened, and I saw her dark eyes wander often to the group at the other end of the room.

It was a long time before the gentlemen rose to go. Mr. Henderson seemed to exert himself to be agreeable, and that he succeeded I knew by the smile with which Kate listened to him. By-and-by Mr. Edwards joined us, still keeping Ina with him. He sat near Kate, with the fair head of the child lying upon his breast, and her small hand playing with his watch-chain. He only spoke now and then, but I am sure she felt his influence. She put aside her pride, and seemed pleased and happy. Once I saw her turn and look thoughtfully at him and the child. I believe she was remembering her absent husband then.

When our pleasant party broke up at last, little Ina still clung to her new friend.

"You will come again and see Ina, won't you?" she pleaded.

"That is as mamma says," he answered, looking at Kate.

"He must come, mamma, musn't he?" cried the child, tugging at her hand.

"Certainly, my darling. Mr. Edwards, you see this young lady puts us all under orders," she said, laughingly.

"I *may* come then?" he asked, in a low voice.

"When you will—you and your friend. You shall always be welcome, for the sake of this little magpie."

He did not thank her in words, but his eyes spoke volumes as he shook hands with her and went away. We stood looking after them till they had closed the gate, and I thought I heard Kate sigh. But the next moment she whirled me off to the kitchen, while she gave some orders to the cook, and we said nothing more about either of the friends during the forenoon.

Who knows though, but the artless affection of a little child may lead these two proud hearts where I can never guide them.

September 19th.

Almost two months since I opened this journal of mine, and to-morrow is my wedding day! How strange it seems that after all my laughing and joking with Cousin Frank, I should marry him! I am afraid all my romance is fast leaving me. I used to dream about this time years ago, and fancy the rapture and embarrassment I should feel. Where are they now? My pulse beats as calmly and coolly as ever, and, though I am happy, I am not wild with joy. I love Frank, and I know he is a good, true, and tender man. I shall stand by his side to-morrow, and promise to be his through life, without a lingering regret, or a thought of another in my heart; but I shall not faint, or weep, or grow hysterical—I leave those things to young ladies who are as romantic as I once was, and I shall take the man of my choice calmly and thoughtfully as an earnest, truthful woman should.

I had hoped that, if I ever married, my wedding-day and Kate's would be the same. But I am afraid this is all out of question. Mr. Henderson returned to New York some week's since, bearing with him the heart of my sister, Lizzie, if I am to judge by the letters and pictures that have been exchanged between them since his departure. But Mr. Edwards remains—an apparent fixture in the quiet town of Templeton.

He calls every day on Kate, and manages to see and walk home with her almost every evening, from somewhere. People have done surmising and wondering upon this subject—they shake their heads, set them down as engaged, and "only hope neither of them may be sorry for it." But I see better how matters stand, and know very well how little dependance may be put upon public gossip in this instance. For once, I wish it was true.

I know they love each other. I have seen Kate watch him, when he did not know it, with a look in her eyes no woman ever gives a man who is not dear to her. And that she is everything to him I am equally sure. He is always gentle, thoughtful, and mild in her presence, though the villagers tell strange tales of his fiery temper. I repeated some of them to Kate, the other day, by way of trying her, but she only smiled, and asked me how long it was since I had turned scandal monger. One comfort I have. Though she loved a man to distraction, nothing could break her own high spirit. She is no weak, inanimate woman, to sit down meekly under injury. I can fancy how her eyes would flash, and her voice ring, if any one dared to infringe upon her rights.

But I am uneasy about her. She is growing pale, and thin, and restless, and now and then I see a look of pain in her eyes. If I ask any questions, she always says she is well, and laughs at my anxiety—but it is evident that something worries and unsettles her. Oh, if she would have confidence in me! But she is reserved and proud, even to her most intimate friends, and has a horror and hatred of anything that resembles what she calls "school-girl gossip."

Evening.

Frank and I have just come from Kate's. We here parted for the last time at the little lattice gate—after to-morrow he may come up the graveled walk with me, and enter the house, late as it may be, and no one will wonder or remark about it. So good-bye to all the lingering partings, the hand-pressures, and farewell kisses we have known in that green and shady spot. Pshaw! I have half a mind not to marry after all. Is it not about to steal all the picturesque and beautiful from a life which is already quiet and uneventful?

We did not find Kate alone this evening. She sat at the piano, in the growing twilight, "crooning" old songs to herself, while buried in the depths of the large easy chair, was Mr. Edwards, with the fair-haired Ina sleeping quietly on his breast. It is strange how much the child loves him. She is never contented unless near him. I think it pleases Kate to see them together so; at least I have never seen her try to check the growing intimacy.

For the last time I tried to persuade Kate to be my bridesmaid. She refused steadily, as she has always done.

"Kate, tell me your reason," I cried at last, hurt by her refusal.

"Reasons are dangerous things," she said, evasively.

"But I must and will have one."

"Well, then, take it. I am an old, married woman, Jenny, with a daughter almost large enough to follow in your footsteps—how should I look as a bridesmaid!"

"Oh, dear! I am so sorry you will be so contrary, Kate," I burst out. "I had set my heart upon having you and Mr. Edwards stand up with us."

Both of them were silent a moment, and avoided looking at each other. At last Kate said, in a constrained voice:

"I am very much obliged for your kind intentions, Jenny—but, really, I cannot grant your wish."

Mr. Edwards suddenly roused himself, put the sleeping Ina on the sofa, and turned towards me.

"And if marriage is any objection, Miss Jenny, I am afraid I shall be ineligible too."

"You—Mr. Edwards!" I exclaimed, looking at him with open-mouthed wonder: "Are you married?"

"Yes."

I dared not look at Kate.

"Perhaps I should have told you before," he said, rising to go. "But it cannot matter much, as we are all such good friends. To-morrow I hope to introduce my wife to you all. For the present I will leave you. Good evening, all."

He passed out of the house and went quickly down the walk. Had a thunderbolt crashed in among us I should have been no more shocked. Kate had risen and stood in the middle of the floor, looking after him, pale as death, and with her dark eyes full of agony and shame. I sprang towards her and threw my arms around her.

"Kate! Kate! Don't look so! Speak to me!"

"Hush!" she said, swallowing a deep sob that shook her whole frame. "If you speak to me now of him I will never forgive you. Leave me now, Jenny. I can bear this best alone."

Frank and I went out together with tears in our eyes.

Looking back, as we passed the window, I saw her go and sink down beside her sleeping child and bury her face in her hands. Poor Kate! I am distressed beyond measure for her, and so angry with the heartless wretch who has brought this desolation upon her that I fancy that I could see him fast to the torture without a single feeling of pity. If I were a man, and as intimate with Kate as I am now, I would call him out and shoot him at once. Being a woman, I must go more quietly to work—yet as surely. And, if I do not make this town too hot to hold him before I leave it, my name is not Jenny Hart.

Sept. 24th.

How little we know each other. For four days I have been a wife—for four days I have been putting off my bridal journey that Kate might share it with me. And not only Kate—but Mr. Edwards also!

This was the way it all came about. On the evening of my wedding, while I was sitting up stairs with my mother and Lizzie, Kate came up, looking white and pale, but magnificently dressed, and with Ina in her arms. I suppose we all looked surprised, for she put the child down and laughed nervously as she said:—

"I suppose I have broken up a council of war—but I can't help it. Frank would make me come up, and he says if you intend to be married to-night it is high time he came after you. The people are all below waiting for you."

We rose up at that, and Lizzie began to put the last touches to my dress and veil.

"Kate, what are you doing?" asked my mother. I looked round. Kate was standing before the mirror putting rouge on her cheeks. Her hand trembled, like a leaf, but she did not turn round till her work was finished.

"I am sure I never knew you painted before," said my mother, who has a perfect horror of the practice.

"There must be a first time to everything, I suppose," said Kate, giving me a look. "And to-night I expect to do things I never dreamed of twenty-four hours ago. Ina, my darling, if you are ready we will go down."

The little one placed her hand in her mother's, and they went down to summon Frank.

I can remember nothing of the wedding. It was such a confused, agitated time with me, that I was only conscious of an intense longing to get away from all the people, and hide myself where they could never find me again. They may say what they choose about the "solemnity of the marriage service," but, in my humble opinion, it is all nonsense. Never, in my life, did I feel so much like a perfect simpleton as then, and Lizzie has told me that the only time she ever saw such an expression on my face before was when I went to the dentist's to have a tooth out, and tried to find some excuse for avoiding the operation after I got there. A romantic looking bride I must have been!

When the awful ceremony was over, and people had finished kissing me, and began to act like reasonable human beings again, I took a long breath and looked after Kate. She had been the first to congratulate us, and then she stepped back to the other side of the room and watched the rest. When I looked up I saw Mr. Edwards making his way through the crowd towards her and Ina. A sudden impulse prompted me to hear what he had to say to her; and, working my way up to her by stealth, I managed to secure a place behind a fat, deaf old lady, who sat very near them, and formed an excellent screen for me.

One would not have thought Kate conscious of Mr. Edwards existence when he stood beside her. But when he spoke she looked up and bowed courteously, and drew Ina farther from him.

"Are you angry with me?" he asked, in a low voice.

"Not in the least, Mr. Edwards."

"Then don't look at me in that way—don't draw my little friend so far away. Kate—what *can* I do? I am married, it is true; but so are you."

"You are kind to remind me of it," she said, scornfully.

"How you mistake me!" he said, eagerly. "Kate—my wife is here to-night—in a few moments all will be known. But first let me swear to you that, though I had fifty wives, I could never love any woman as I love you—never worship——"

"Stop, Sir!" said Kate, starting back from him with an indignant scorn that was fine. "How dare you talk to me like this? How dare you insult me so? Leave me!"

"Nay, Kate, you know it is true—what is more—you know that love is returned!" he answered, with a little, low, triumphant laugh.

"Coward!"

She caught her child in her arms and turned to leave him. Even in that moment of bitter anger and humiliation she would not stain her honor by a lie. He placed himself before her as she was about to pass him.

"One moment," he said, in an agitated voice. "Only one moment, and then, if you will it, I will never see you again."

He hurried from the room unperceived. Kate stood still, where he had left her, leaning her head against the soft curls of Ina's hair. I thought she was weeping. She did not look up as Mr. Edwards rejoined her, but I did, and saw, to my astonishment, that the dark, swarthy complexion had disappeared. Cheek, neck and brow were fair as Ina's, though the jetty hair and whiskers remained.

He did not speak to Kate, but turned to the company, who had, by this time, begun to see that something unusual was going on.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, he said, in a clear voice, "I wish you to witness the forgiveness of some I have wronged most bitterly. Four years ago, a reckless, desperate man left his wife and infant child as he thought forever. The name of that man was Edward Grant. To-night he stands before you a repentant, sorrowful alien from his country and his home. It rests with you to say if he shall rest at last—but oh, still more than all, it rests with these!"

I had seen Kate start violently when he first spoke. As he turned towards her, she fixed her eyes eagerly upon his face. With a sweep of his hand the false beard fell off, and he stood before us a handsome, noble-looking man, with large blue eyes, and sunny hair like Ina's. He sank upon one knee before Kate.

"Can you forgive me, dearest?"

The bewildered expression of her face had been gradually changing into a look of intense joy, and when he said that she uttered a kind of scream—"Ina—Ina—it is your father!" and flung herself into his arms. "Papa," lisped the little girl, "is it you?"

He gathered them both to his breast in a close and fervent embrace, bowed his head over them, and murmured, in a broken voice:—

"Thank God? My wife! my child!"

I do not believe there was a dry eye in the room. I am certain I wept rivers, and never have I felt so grateful, so thankful and devotional as then.

Dear Kate is happy now. The cold, proud look has left her face entirely, and she goes round the house with a smile that is, in itself, perfect sunshine. As for Mr. Edwards, (or Edward Grant, as I must now call him), he seems to devour her and Ina with his eyes, and is not easy a moment if they are out of his sight. To-morrow we all start on the long-deferred wedding tour—five as happy hearts as ever beat!

AUNT SALLY IN BOSTON.

BY CLARA SYDNEY.

"I never went to Boston but just once," said the good old lady, "and I must say I never want to go again. Of all the confused places that ever I saw or heard of, that beats all. Why, the night I got there I thought to my soul I should have gone crazy—everything dreadful seemed happening right close by our hotel. If I jumped up once to see what the matter was, I did a dozen times; but I never could seem to see that anybody looked frightened, for the street was full of people who looked as if they had no idea of going to bed very soon, although it was as much as a quarter of ten o'clock.

"I wanted to do as other folks did when I went to the table, and so I looked round to see what they did first. On every plate, or close beside of it, there was a piece of paper with something printed on it that looked like poetry. I noticed that everybody went to reading this. I was pleased to see them all so fond of reading, and I took out my specks so as to do what the rest did; for I always was very fond of reading, and it seemed a very pretty idea to be all of us reading poetry, while the waiters got us something ready to eat. When I took up my printed paper, the first thing I saw was something about soup. I didn't think that very poetic, and the words that followed didn't rhyme with it at all. They were all the names of something to eat, and in a few minutes I began to understand that it was a bill of fare. I tell you I was proper glad I hadn't said a word about poetry, as I had come very near doing to my next neighbor. Well, then I thought I'd call for all the things that I liked best on the list, so I began; but no sooner did I tell a waiter of some new thing that I wanted, than he snatched up my plate and ran off with it, and I never saw what I had on it then any more. Now I didn't expect such treatment when I paid full price for everything that I had. I supposed that when I asked for a thing they would bring it and put it on my plate with the other things I'd asked for. I tell you this whipping everything off at such a rate cheated me out of many a good morsel that I had counted on.

"And then it's such an awful undertaking to get anywhere in Boston. My stars! Why, I liked to have died getting about to the places I wanted to see. I never walked so much in all the days of my life, besides spending all my spare change for riding. I tell you what it is, girls, I'm amazing thankful to be safe back in dear, sweet-smelling, quiet old Comfortville once more. I've learned how good it is to have a country home."

THE TWO FLOWERS OF CREATION.

Women love flowers, and flowers are like women in their beauty and sweetness; so they ought to grow up together. No flower garden looks complete without a woman in it; no woman ever seems so lovely as when she is surrounded by flowers. She should have her fragrant bouquet at the party; window plants in her parlor; if possible, some rich and rare flowering shrubs in her conservatory; but, better than all these, and supplying all, each woman should have a flower-garden. Every man who has the least gallantry or paternal feeling, should make a flower-garden for his wife and daughters. Every house—the smallest cottage in the country as well as the largest mansion—should have around it the perfume of lilacs, pinks, and other hardy odoriferous flowers, that cost no trouble, but bring with them every year a world of beauty and fragrance.

THOUGHTS BY A PHILOSOPHER.

If self-knowledge be a path to virtue, virtue is a much better one to self-knowledge. The more pure the soul becomes, it will, like certain precious stones that are sensible to the contact of poison, shrink from the fetid vapors of evil impressions. Pursuit of earthly pleasures makes us as earthly-minded as engrossment in business. We would rather discover truth than hear it. Domestic life is the most delightful, because it repeats our childhood. Lamartine says, "We begin to feel the inanity of existence when we are no longer of use to any person—that is, when we are no longer loved."

THE RAT AND THE BABY.—A few days ago, Mrs. Boocoçb, widow, residing in Avenue A, placed her female infant in bed up stairs, fast asleep. In the course of a short time afterwards she was alarmed by its cries of distress. She hastened to the bed-room, and found that her child was attacked by a rat, which had seized the top part of its left hand, and had inflicted a severe wound across the knuckles, as well as underneath, lacerating the flesh, and bleeding very severely. But it is very probable that had this little infant, who is only ten months old, been seized in the throat instead of the hand, the result would have proved fatal.

ITALIANS.—General Pepe says in his published work, "The Italians both fight and die gaily. An Austrian ball first struck a man named Raboldi on the breast; he expired, exclaiming, 'Happy that I am! I have the honor of dying first on the field of battle!' And he recommended the captain not to forget to write his name first. 'And mine second!' cried another, struck by a ball in the stomach. A third refused the assistance of his comrades, saying, 'My loss is sufficient, without making a fourth leave his post.'"

THE CHANGE.

A NEW POEM BY ALEXANDER SMITH.

[*From "City Poems," in press by Ticknor & Fields.*]

"Oh! never, never can I call
Another morning to my day,
And now through shade to shade I fall
From afternoon to evening gray."
In bitterness these words I said,
And lo! when I expected least,—
For day was gone,—a moonrise spread
Its emerald radiance up the east.

By passion's gaudy candle-lights,
I sat and watched the world's brave play;
Blown out,—how poor the trains and sights
Looked in the cruel light of day!
I cursed Man for his spaniel heart,
His bounded brain, his lust of pelf—
Alas! each crime of field and mart
Lived in a dark disease of self.

I saw the smiles and mean salaams
Of slavish hearts; I heard the cry
Of maddened people's throwing palms
Before each cheered and timbreled lie.
I loathed the brazen front and brag
Of bloated time; in self-defence
Withdrew I to my lonely crag,
And fortress of indifference.

But Nature is revenged on those
Who turn from her to lonely days:
Contentment, like the speedwell, blows
Along the common-beaten ways.
The dead and thick green-mantled moats
That gird my house resembled me,
Or some long-weeded hull that rots
Upon a glazing tropic sea.

And madness ever round us lies,
The final bourne and end of thought;
And Pleasure shuts her glorious eyes
At one cold glance and melts to naught;
And Nature cannot hear us moan;
She smiles in sunshine, raves in rain—
The music breathed by Love alone
Can ease the world's immortal pain.

The sun forever hastes sublime,
Waved onward by Orion's lance;
Obedient to the spheral chime,
Across the world the seasons dance,
The flaming elements ne'er bewail
Their iron bounds, their less or more
The sea can drown a thousand sail,
Yet rounds the pebbles on the shore.

I looked with pride on what I'd done,]
I counted merits o'er anew,
In presence of the burning sun,
Which drinks me like a drop of dew:
A lofty scorn I dared to shed
On human passions, hopes, and jars,
I—standing on the countless dead,
And pitied by the countless stars.

But mine is now a humbled heart,
My lonely pride is weak as tears;
No more I seek to stand apart,
A mocker of the rolling years.
Imprisoned in this wintry clime,
I've found enough, O Lord of breath,
Enough to plume the feet of time,
Enough to hide the eyes of death.

THE BROTHER AND SISTER.

BY CLARA SYDNEY.

CHAPTER I.

Hector and Camille Ingersol were the children of a wealthy English gentleman. They were born, and, until they were nearly twelve years old, they lived in the midst of luxury; were waited on by servants, and tenderly cared for by the kindest and best of mothers.

Mrs. Ingersol was never strong. For some years her health had been declining; and, at last, in the dark and sad month of November, while the sky grew grim with clouds and the winter winds howled dismally around, she died.

Died; and left a house most desolate; for she had been the idol of her husband's heart, and all in all to her dear children.

Ingersol said that with the life of his beloved Harriet all his good fortune departed; and it seemed so; for the first snow had hardly whitened her grave when there came a fatal revulsion in his business affairs; and in a month's time the poor little children were penniless orphans. Their father's strength and courage had failed him in his time of sorest need. And he who had ever been the most cheerful and light-hearted of men, who had laughed at forebodings, and scouted the whole idea of there being a dark side of life, died broken-hearted.

Where *then* were the friends of Ingersol? Of course there were plenty ready to step forward and adopt the "sweet children" of the friends of whom they thought so much; in whose elegant and luxurious dwelling they had spent so many pleasant hours.

The terrified young orphans were surrounded by those who had known and petted them all their lives. Many of these people had more than once importuned Mr. and Mrs. Ingersol to *give* them one of their children. Now, poor little things! they will be glad to find home and love wherever they can. How happy to have been born in the circle of "the first society," for there they will certainly be well provided for, even though their parents have failed them.

The brother and sister talked, amid their tears, of where they should go to live.

"We have no aunt or uncle, sister," said Hector; "but everybody is so kind to us that it will not matter. We will go and live till we grow up with some of the pretty ladies that loved mamma so much. Which one shall it be? we must go together, you know."

These children had tasted of the bitterness which *death* causes; now they were to drink of the *more* bitter cup of *life*. There was an auction in their beautiful home: everything was sold and taken away.

"I do not want my father's things all carried off," cried Hector. "They are my things now; and this is my house. I wonder how people can *dare* to behave so in it. I will sue them all."

A loud laugh from the audience was the first response to the indignant remonstrance of the little boy; and then one of "the pretty ladies who thought so much of dear mamma" said to him:—"Hector, your papa died insolvent, and his creditors are trying to get their pay by selling his things. You must not make such a noise."

"I don't know what insolvent means,—but my papa was a good man; and I wish people would let his things alone and clear right out of this house. If I had a gun I would shoot them—I would—and I mean to make just as much noise as ever I like."

When at length Hector was made to understand that neither he nor his sister had a right to anything his parents had left, he went weeping and sobbing to impart to her the distressing story.

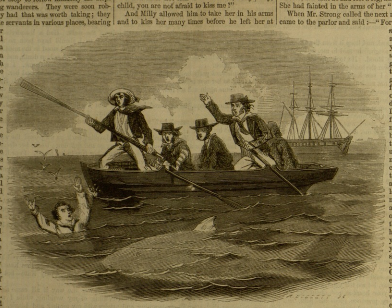
"And we can't go to live *anywhere*, Milly; nobody speaks to us as they did when father and mother were alive. I don't believe there is a single person in the world who will take any care of us. They are taking away things out of the house; and a great ugly man, with a long black beard, has bought the house, and says we must be taken out of it. Who is to take us? Where are we to go? Oh! papa! mamma! why did you die?"

"Let us tie up some things in a bundle and run away," cried Milly.

The child supposed that all her mother's clothes, and perhaps all her brother's and her own, would be taken by the remorseless beings who seemed to her like robbers ranging through the house.

They hastily tied up what they thought they should need, and running down the back stairs of the house, got into the great, shady garden in the rear of their beautiful home—theirs no more; and away they went, out into the bewildering streets of the city.

We must not stop to follow minutely the steps of these young wanderers. They were soon robbed of all they had that was worth taking; they worked as little servants in various places, bearing anything rather than part, until at last, when they were in their fifteenth year, (they were twins) they resolved to separate for a few years, and try to earn for themselves the means of procuring a little home somewhere in the country. This was their air castle, and a very great deal of comfort did they take in it. Hector went to sea as cabin boy, Camille went to Lowell and entered a factory. She missed her dear brother sadly—every night she cried herself to sleep thinking of him. She prayed fervently to God that He would make both herself and her beloved Hector good and pious, just as they ought to be to be dear to Him; and she also prayed, with many, many sobs, that Hector might be protected in all his wanderings over the dangerous sea, and be brought safely and happily back to her.



If the prayers of friendless orphans are not heard on high, *who shall* look upward with any hope of pity?

Mortals are not heard because of their goodness, but because of their *need;* and the needs of all such as Camille is great.

God *did* hear her, and her brother was protected both in storm and calm, and his young spirit was filled with reverent love for its Creator. It was *well* with the lad.

CHAPTER II.

Camille was now sixteen years old, and very beautiful. She was beset on all sides by temptation, but she walked steadily on, turning not to the right hand nor to the left.

But now her health began to fail, and her spirit and hopes to sink. She had not heard from her brother in many months. Her tasks grew wearisome, and the days seemed very long.

In a sad and heavy manner a whole year passed. Camille had spent all her little savings in paying her doctor's bill, but she was no better. Her strength was so nearly gone that it was with difficulty that she could walk to and from the mill in which she worked. But the friendless girl knew that there was no other way for *her* than to work on until she fell to die—yes, there *was* another way—month by month, week by week, day by day, with patient but determined watchfulness and waiting, did the tempter follow on her track. He was the kindest and most considerate of men to the feeble girl. All her companions wondered at her cold ingratitude towards him. He it was who stood beside her when she grew too faint to work, who carried her from the mill when she was too weak to walk, and who talked, and reasoned, and plead with her to give up her obstinate endeavor to continue her labors. He wanted her to rest awhile and allow him to supply her with the means of doing so. He wanted her to ride out with him and breathe country air; he wanted her to let him take her to a sweet cottage in the country, where she could remain and be well taken care of until her recovery. But the unreasonable girl would do nothing that he desired. She did have to ride home with him now and then; *that* she could not very well avoid, for when it stormed he always came and took a carriage full of the girls home. He was very kind—they all said so. He was handsome, too, and a great favorite among the girls in the mill. To be sure he was nearly forty years old, and his hair was beginning to turn gray; but then no one minded that in *him*, he was *so* pleasant. When Camille one night absurdly declined to ride home, he only took her in his arms and carried her to the carriage amid the laughter of the girls. Camille never resented such liberties as she *might* and probably *would* have done, had she been well and strong; as it was, this man had been so gentle and so kind to her that he had won her heart—she had, therefore, not only outward but inward foes to contend with, and her strength was failing. She felt very, very desolate, lonesome and homesick; and it cannot be denied that the company and care of this man was sweet and dear to her sad young heart—more so than anything else in the world.

How cruel, cruel of a well, strong man to win away the love of a poor young girl, when he *knew* that he should cause her only trouble, and shame, and sin, if his plan succeeded.

There are many such men in this evil world, and women are not able to cope with them; but God will bring them into judgment, and they shall mourn at the last, and be in bitterness.

Well, but our poor Camille! Oh! that Hector might return to deliver his sister from the power that was weaving its fetters round her—that was snbverting her very will.

Strong (that was the man's name) always got rid of the other girls before he would take Milly home; and now, when they were alone in the carriage, he talked to her in such a way that the poor girl had no power to oppose him. She *knew* that she was alone in the wide world; she *knew* that no one cared whether she kept her good name unsullied; she *knew* that Mr. Strong had been very kind to her, and she could not say that she did not believe herself dear to him; she *knew* that she should die if she continued much longer to work in the mill; but she wanted to live so as to please God, and be worthy to look her brother in the face if ever he came back to her—if she must die, she must, but she would die innocent. All this Milly *thought* as she heard Strong talk; but when he drew her to him, and said, "What is the use, poor little creature, of fighting off the only one who pets you, whose company gives comfort and pleasure to you? What *is* the use of dying when you may live and be well and happy? Who ever will know or care for what you do? What and whom do you fear?" Milly pushed him feebly from her, and said, "My brother will care, and *God* will *know*. His eye is on us now—Oh! *don't* talk to me any more—take me home. If it were not for Hector I would wish that I were already dead."

"You shall not talk so nor feel so, Milly; nay, child, you are not afraid to kiss me?"

And Milly allowed him to take her in his arms and to kiss her many times before he left her at her door. But she was crying bitterly when he led her up the steps of her boarding house. His wicked heart felt happy, for he thought that it would not be long now before Milly would consent to go with him. She had made no objection when he told her that he would call in his carriage for her the next morning to take an early ride.

Milly trembled so much that she could hardly stand. Strong supported her until the door was opened, and then led her in.

"There is some one in the parlor waiting for you, Miss Ingersol," said the girl who opened the door.

"For me!" cried Milly in great surprise. Mr. Strong departed, and Milly, strengthened by curiosity, ran to her room to bathe her face and smooth her hair before meeting the stranger.

CHAPTER III.

We must now return to Hector. He had some singular adventures which cannot here be related, but after a year's pretty hard usage, he at length got a "berth," as the sailors say, in which he was well treated and very much liked. He wrote a great many letters to his sister, and mailed them wherever he could get a chance. Many of these Milly never received. Her letters she always sent where he directed her to; and when the vessel entered a port in which Hector expected that a letter from his sister awaited him, he was as nervous and excited as a witch until he got leave to go on shore and see if he could find it. If the letter was not there, how heavily the heart of Hector fell—he could hardly speak to any one for several days. The sailors used to laugh at him, and say he was but "humbugging" them when he said it was *only* a sister he had expected to hear from, that they were sure the sly boy had a "sweetheart" of his own.

"My sister is the only girl I know in all the world, and the only girl I care for, either," was his ready and sincere reply.

When the letter was there, what a happy lad was Hector. How he tore it open, and almost swallowed its contents; then, when he got back to the vessel, how happily he crept away to enjoy another slow and quiet reading of the beloved messenger from a loving heart.

The vessel was at the port of Havana, and, as usual, Hector was wild to go ashore.

"Another letter from that sweetheart sister?" asked the officer that granted him leave to go.

"I hope so, sir," replied Hector, springing gaily over the side into the boat that was to bear him to the land.

From a spirit of mischief the men rowed as slowly as possible.

"Do hurry up," cried Hector, impatiently.

But the men wouldn't hurry. Hector grew vexed.

This pleased the men, and they teazed him all the more merrily.

"I'll jump over and swim," cried Hector, exasperated.

"Do, and the sharks will eat you. Your tender body wouldn't make more'n one mouthful for a full grown shark."

"I'll jump if you don't row faster." The boy rose and stood on the side of the boat.

"Hurry!" he commanded. The men roared with laughter. "A new skipper," they shouted. One of them shipped his oars. Hector glanced round. The shore looked near—nearer than it was. He could see no sharks. He thought a wetting would do him no harm such a hot eve. Another moment, and he had leaped far from the side of the boat, and was striking out for the shore.

The men were greatly alarmed—the water was alive with sharks—they fooled no longer, but rowed after Hector with might and main.

"Coming *now*, are you?" laughed Hector, back at them. They were within a few yards of him when he uttered a fearful cry, and, throwing up his arms, sank, while blood stained the dark water.

In an instant the men all began to beat and splash the water with all their strength. They caught the glitter of wet fins, and knew that the monsters were frightened for the moment. Just then Hector rose to the top of the water. Quick as thought one of the men was over after him. He returned with the youth in his arms, and they were both drawn on board; but, alas! for Hector—*one of his legs was gone*—bitten off above the knee.

They got him ashore and called a surgeon—a crowd gathered about the pale, senseless boy. "Who is he? What is his name?" asked an old gentleman, seeming much interested in the beautiful features and long wet curls of the unconscious boy.

"Hector Ingersol, your honor, is his name."

"I thought so. He is the express image of his mother."

The old gentleman had Hector conveyed to his hotel; and, when he was well enough to listen, told him that he was a rich man, and Mrs. Ingersol's uncle. That he had sought far and wide for the children of his dead niece, who had been for many years his only relative. He would not allow the boy to talk; but he talked enough for both; dear old man! he said that they would go together and hunt up Camille; and then all go home to England and be happy.

When Camille entered the parlor she saw *two* strangers instead of one—a young man and an old one sat before her.

"My dear, darling sister!" cried the youth, hopping forward and throwing his arms about Milly. Milly gave one look at him, saw that it was indeed Hector, saw that he had lost a leg, and saw no more. She had fainted in the arms of her "newly found."

When Mr. Strong called the next morning, Milly came to the parlor and said:—"For all your *kindness* to me I am grateful; all your intended *unkindness* I forgive. When the temptation grew too strong for me, God opened to me a door of escape. I have *true* friends to guard me now. My brother has retunred; and an uncle of my mother has also come, who will take us both away to England. I shall never see you again, sir; but, oh! I do pray that God may have mercy on you, and save your soul. I shall pray for you until I die. Good-bye—forever." Strong, pale, trembling with pain on every feature, approached her; but she ran quickly from the room. In a few hours a carriage rolled away from that nice boarding-house, bearing the happy Hector, his uncle, and the grateful Milly.

A beautiful English home now holds the orphans; and in their grateful love the old age of their uncle is as happy as is their youth. Milly has not forgotten her promise to pray for her enemy; but her heart has forgotten its pain when she remembers him. She is a strong and healthy maiden now; remembering the dismal past only as a dark and troubled dream. She committed her way unto the Lord, and he directed her path. She trusted in Him, and he did not forsake her. He has fulfilled to her His gracious promise, that none who trust in Him shall (long) be desolate. As for Hector, he says *a leg* is not a circnmstance to an uncle, a home, and to a good education; for which he has exchanged his leg and made a fortune in the bargain.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A Father.—It is useless to beat your disobedient son so cruelly. No boy was ever made better by *constant* flogging. If he is so incorrigible as you represent him to be, all your harshness will only make him worse. Are you certain that you have done your duty by him?—that you have exhibited as much interest in his welfare, and sympathy with his youthful trials and aspirations, as a father should betray? If he does not love you, there is a reason for it somewhere; and unless he can be won to love you, his heart's obedience you can never command. Fathers are seldom loving and genial enough with their children, but, on the contrary, they are too commonly cold, unsympathizing, and tyrannical. They expend all their good nature and smiles upon customers and strangers, and reserve all their spleen and frowns for the home circle. We do not intend these remarks for your especial case, but, doubtless, you would find it much to your advantage to give the whole subject under consideration your most thoughtful attention. We live for our children; we strive to make them happy and comfortable; we trust to them to perpetuate our names. Why, then, should we so treat them while we live that they will curse our memories when we are dead?

Jonathan.—All we know about tornadoes and earthquakes is what we have read, never having been present at the "performances" of either. We have no disposition to doubt the statements put forth by those who have witnessed the devastating effects of these terrible convulsions of nature, but are willing to accept them in full. It is an indisputable fact that Herculaneum, Pompei, and other cities have been destroyed by earthquakes, and overwhelmed by the eruptions of volcanoes; and it is equally true that tornadoes have torn up gigantic trees by the roots, blown villages into ruin, and hurled huge rocks to marvelous distances. We are quite content, therefore, to believe in the prowess of volcanoes, earthquakes, and tornadoes, without insisting on their giving us practical proofs of their power upon our own person, or even in our own neighborhood.

Miss Mary L.—The quotation is this—

"And peace went with them, one and all
And each calm pillow spread;
But Guilt was my grim chamberlain
That lighted me to bed,
And drew my midnight curtains round,
With fingers bloody red."

It occurs in "The Dream of Eugene Aram," by Thomas Hood, which will be found in any edition of Hood's works.

October.—It would be a difficult matter to obtain a divorce from your husband, under the circumstances you mention. It would be quite proper, however, for you to take any means that may be necessary to obtain *legal* proof of his guilt, concerning which you are now so morally certain.

A Constant Reader.—Let the hypocrite go. Why should you mourn for a man who has proved himself to be utterly untrustworthy and heartless? It strikes us that you should rejoice in your escape from marrying such a nefarious scoundrel. But girls are queer creatures.

P. B. J.—Have your execution ready, and as soon as the chattel mortgage expires let the sheriff levy on the goods. Most chattel mortgages are bogus affairs, got up to protect dishonest debtors, and the courts never show them any favor.

Machinist.—Before applying for your patent you should consult some lawyer who is versed in such matters, and have him draw up your specifications in the best possible manner.

Die Vernon.—Your father is quite right in warning you against the sort of reading to which you refer. Read history, travels, biography, the Bible, Shakespeare, Milton, Carlyle, and the Ledger.

Alexius.—We don't know what cities you include in your idea of "the principal cities of the Union." The price of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary varies from $6 to $10, according to the costliness of the binding.

Sincere.—It was a very foolish act to change your name for so slight a reason; but since you have neglected the matter so long, you had better not disturb it now, but go on as you have been doing.

Samuel, The Novelist.—No, sir. You do not begin to write well enough to produce "a good romance." You seem to be ignorant of the simplest rules of grammar, and your style is as dry as a chip, and only fit for a treatise on sawdust.

Somebody, who writes from Warrenton, Georgia, without giving his name, asks us to send him the numbers of the Ledger from August 29th to September 12th. If he will give us his name, we will send him the numbers mentioned.

Chickopee.—It would not be proper for a girl to present her miniature, unasked, to a man. Such voluntary favors are apt to be ascribed to wrong motives. Men are so suspicious of evil!

C. C.—Yes. We can let you have the numbers of the Ledger from August 8th to September 18th. They will cost four cents apiece.

Armond.—"A young married couple" had better not meddle with any "medical book," unless it be one recommended by their parents' family physician.

A Mother.—There is nothing which will remove the pock marks from your child's face, but time. As he grows older, they will gradually disappear.

Elvinia.—You had better apply to a magistrate, or to a lawyer. The man will annoy you until a legal barrier be raised to protect you from him.

Amanda W.—Your reverend friend did not give the quotation correctly. It does not read, "The man that hath no music in his *soul*." This celebrated passage occurs in act V., scene I., of "The Merchant of Venice," and is spoken by Lorenzo to Jessica, old Shylock's daughter. The entire passage is full of unexampled beauty, and runs thus:—

"How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears: soft stillness, and the night,
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica: look, how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patens of bright gold;
There's not the smallest orb, which thou behold'st,
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubims:
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it."
Jessica.—"I am never merry when I hear sweet music."
Lorenzo.—"The reason is, your spirits are attentive:
For do but notice a wild and wanton herd,
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing, and neighing loud,
Which is the hot condition of their blood,
If they but hear, perchance, a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
Their savage eyes turned to a modest gaze,
By the sweet power of music; therefore, the poet
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and floods,
Since nought so stockish, hard, and full of rage,
But music for the time doth change his nature.
The man that hath no music in *himself*,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils:
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus.
Let no such man be trusted."

Madame G.—You are undoubtedly mistaken. We are quite satisfied that kindness will effect more than any system of severity and terrorism can accomplish, in any family whatever. Of course, a considerate and inflexible enforcement of discipline is not at all inconsistent with the utmost kindness and affection. Barbarism and savageism inflict punishment to gratify a brutal and revengeful spirit, not to promote the ends of justice and the well-being of the offender. Parents often punish their children because they (the parents) happen to be out of humor at the time when an act is performed which, at another and more auspicious moment, would be passed over without a word of reproof, and which, in fact, is utterly inoffensive. In such a case, it is evident that the child is not punished for any wrong it has done, but simply for the gratification of the untamed spirit of barbarism which rages in the parent's bosom. This, of course, the child knows and bitterly feels to be unjust; and thereby a spirit of rebellion and revenge is born and nourished in his heart, which grows stronger and fiercer on every repetition of the besotted cruelty on the part of the parent. In this way many a noble spirit is turned awry during the impressible season of youth, which kind reproof and loving consideration would have developed into admirable manhood.

Willful Brande, Baltimore.—We do not perceive any reason why you should be *compelled* to frequent bad company, or be led from the path of virtue and integrity simply because you are bashful and afraid to frequent good and refined society. You can certainly stay at home, and read, and study, and write, if you choose. By doing this, and occasionally going into society, your bashfulness will wear off gradually. You can also make a practice of calling frequently at the houses of a few choice friends. In short, there are innumerable ways for a young man of any nerve and stamina, and character, to spend his evenings creditably and advantageously to himself. You should be ashamed to talk about "being led away," and all that sort of nonsense.

Yale Student.—The passage to which you refer occurs in Sir Walter Scott's "Rokeby," and closes Bertram Risingham's sketch of his life and his exploits as a buccanier. His words are these:—

"And now my race of terror run,
Mine be the eve of tropic sun.
No pale gradations mark his rays,
No twilight dew his wrath allays;
With disc like battle target red,
He rushes to his gory bed,
Dies the wide wave with ruddy light,
Then sinks at once—and all is night."

P. and W.—In dancing the polka politeness dictates that the lady should be permitted to select her own time for discontinuing the figure. We give no reasons why we answer or do not answer any question propounded to us. We always consult our own convenience in regard to answering communications in this department of the Ledger; and we wish it to be distinctly understood that whoever sends us questions, must do so with the understanding that they have no claim to an answer or an explanation. We always seek, however, to distribute our attention among our correspondents as fairly as their numerous communications and the limited space we can devote to this department will permit.

A Young Man says that last winter he met a young lady at a party, and in a short time afterwards was engaged to her. Recently they quarreled, and he was soon engaged to another "young lady." Now, young lady number one and her friends are angry at his precipitate perfidy, and upbraid him vehemently. He, "not feeling quite right in his mind," wants to know what we think about the matter. We think that young lady number one should be congratulated on having escaped marriage with a person of such volatile affections, and that if young lady number two don't marry him speedily, some young lady number three will be apt to cut her out.

Chicago.—The astronomer of your city who says he thinks the universe might be improved in its mechanism, had better apply for the post of Commissioner of Patents. All we can say about the matter is, that we have never noticed any point in the solar and stellar systems which struck us as needing to be "improved." Perhaps, however, if we had your astronomer's telescopic vision, we might detect faults not visible to the ordinary "naked eye." Or perhaps the defects he notices are only reflections of the knots and decayed spots upon the beam in his eye.

W. W.—Wait till you become of age, and then you will have a right to marry as you please. In the meantime you can be learning to earn your own living, and then if your father should disinherit you for marrying contrary to his wishes, you will be able to fight the battle of life on your own hook. It would be better for every heir in the country were he disinherited and compelled to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. Fortunes—ready-made—are too frequently a curse to young people.

A Young Philadelphian.—Of course a young lady should take it as an insult if a man, whom she has met for the first time in an omnibus, asks her to alight and take refreshments with him, at a saloon or elsewhere. You must be a great simpleton to imagine that he was only actuated, in doing so, by feelings of politeness.

Albanian.—You were rightly served. A man has no business to engage in a disreputable enterprise, nor in any way, shape, or manner to countenance those who are prosecuting a disgraceful business. We have no sympathy with meanness or mean people, nor with any one who has aught to do with it or them.

Geraldine.—Read Hood's "Song of the Shirt" to your hard-hearted employer. That is worth all the sermons on charity and reports of committees on poverty ever spoken or printed. If he can withstand its terrible portraitures and penetrating pathos, he is unassailable and utterly given over to the power of the evil one.

Samson.—We think you had better turn your strength (if you possess as much as you claim to have) into some useful and productive channel, instead of seeking to exhibit for "twenty-five cents admission—children half price," like a common mountebank.

W. A. G.—The "one-line poem" you quote—

"The conscious water saw its God and blushed,"

is said to have been written by Milton, when a lad at school, as an exercise upon Christ's miracle of turning water into wine.

Gaffori.—In the Ledger of March 14th you will find a full account of the steps which it is necessary to take in order to obtain an appointment as cadet to the Military Academy at West Point.

S. P. G., Little York.—The $2 subscription for the Ledger does not include the postage. *That* you pay at the office of delivery.

Perseverance, Philadelphia.—Ask any good lawyer in your city, what books a person, intending to practice law in the State of Pennsylvania, should study, and he will tell you.

Doubter.—Provision has been made, by Act of Congress, for preserving the right of American citizenship to children born abroad of American parents.

G. G.—No girl should make male acquaintances while traveling. How are you to tell what villains you may be becoming connected with?

Seraphine.—We do not wish to buy the patent for any instrument, whether musical or unmusical. We have no taste for "speculations" of any kind.

Commodore.—You should apply to the Secretary of the Navy. He would undoubtedly give you all the information that is accessible on the subject to which you refer.

Querist.—Etoile—the name of the Island Princess—is pronounced *eightwol* in French; or *ectoil*, if you anglicise it.

E. H. J.—No doubt it would improve your health to go to sea.

W. H., Louisville.—It would be quite proper for you to send the Ledger to the young lady.

Young Farmer.—Have your father sue the man for the amount he owes you.

J. A. B.—Direct your letters to any of the young ladies—or first to one and then to another, and so on.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*